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## Events, Opportunities

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HEADLINE	06/03 Russia intends to stay in Ukraine?
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SOURCE	<a href="https://apnews.com/article/russia-ukraine-putin-moscow-government-and-politics-139234bb95a3fe3ca2de0fe2c716dda8">https://apnews.com/article/russia-ukraine-putin-moscow-government-and-politics-139234bb95a3fe3ca2de0fe2c716dda8</a>
GIST	<p>When Vladimir Putin sent troops into Ukraine in late February, the Russian president vowed his forces would not occupy the neighboring country. But as the invasion reached its 100th day Friday, Russia seemed increasingly unlikely to relinquish the territory it has taken in the war.</p> <p>The ruble is now an official currency in the southern Kherson region, alongside the Ukrainian hryvnia. Residents there and in Russia-controlled parts of the Zaporizhzhia region are getting offered Russian passports. The Kremlin-installed administrations in both regions have talked about plans to become part of Russia.</p> <p>The Moscow-backed leaders of separatist areas in eastern Ukraine's Donbas region, which is mostly Russian-speaking, have shared similar intentions. Putin recognized the separatists' self-proclaimed republics as independent states two days before launching the invasion. Fighting has intensified in Ukraine's east as Russia seeks to "liberate" all of the Donbas.</p> <p>The Kremlin has largely kept mum about its plans for the cities, towns and villages it has bombarded with missiles, encircled and finally captured.</p> <p>Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Friday that Russian troops have succeeded in their main stated task of protecting civilians in the separatist-controlled areas. He added that Russian forces have "liberated" parts of Ukraine and "this work will continue until all the goals of the special military operation are achieved."</p> <p>In a video message marking the war's first 100 days, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy indicated that his country would not submit easily to Russian aggression after showing it could withstand months of attacks from a larger adversary.</p> <p>"We have defended Ukraine for 100 days already. Victory will be ours," he said</p> <p>Annexing more land from Ukraine was never the main goal of the invasion, but Moscow is unlikely to let go of its military gains, according to political analysts.</p> <p>"Of course (Russia) intends to stay," Andrei Kolesnikov, senior fellow at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, said. To Russia, "it's a pity to give away what has been occupied, even if it was not part of the original plan."</p> <p>Putin has described the goals of the invasion somewhat vaguely, saying it was aimed at the "demilitarization" and "denazification" of Ukraine. It was widely believed that the Kremlin intended initially to install a pro-Moscow government in Kyiv and to prevent Ukraine from joining NATO and taking other steps away from Russia's sphere of influence.</p> <p>Russia captured much of Kherson and neighboring Zaporizhzhia early in the war, gaining control over most of Ukraine's Sea of Azov coast and securing a partial land corridor to the Crimean Peninsula, which Russia annexed from Ukraine in 2014.</p> <p>There was hardly a warm welcome from the locals. Residents of the cities of Kherson and Melitopol took to the streets to protest the occupation, facing off with Russian soldiers in plazas. Ukrainian officials warned that Russia might stage a referendum in Kherson to declare the region an independent state.</p> <p>They installed people with pro-Kremlin views to replace mayors and other local leaders who had disappeared in what Ukrainian officials and media said were kidnappings. Russian flags were raised Russian state broadcasts that promoted the Kremlin's version of the invasion supplanted Ukrainian TV channels.</p>

The Russian ruble this month was introduced as the second official currency in both the Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions — at least in the parts under Russian control — and pro-Russian administrations started offering a “one-time social payment” of 10,000 rubles (roughly \$163) to local residents.

Top Russian officials started touring the regions, touting the territories’ prospects for being integrated into Russia. Deputy Prime Minister Marat Khusnullin visited Kherson and Zaporizhzhia in mid-May and indicated they could become part of “our Russian family.”

A senior official in the Kremlin’s ruling United Russia party, Andrei Turchak, put it even more bluntly in a meeting with residents of Kherson: “Russia is here forever.”

Members of the pro-Kremlin administrations in both regions soon announced that the areas would seek to be incorporated into Russia. While it remains unclear when or if it will happen, Russia is laying the groundwork.

An office of Russia’s migration services opened in Melitopol, taking applications for Russian citizenship in a fast-track procedure Putin expanded to residents of the Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions. The rapid procedure was first implemented in 2019 in the rebel-controlled areas of the Donbas, where more than 700,000 people have received Russian passports.

Oleg Kryuchkov, an official in Russia-annexed Crimea, said this week that the two southern regions have switched to Russian internet providers; state media ran footage of people lining up to get Russian SIM cards for their cellphones. Kryuchkov also said that both regions were switching to the Russian country code, +7, from the Ukrainian +380.

Senior Russian lawmaker Leonid Slutsky, a member of the Russian delegation in stalled peace talks with Ukraine, said that referendums on joining Russia could take place in the Donbas, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions as early as July.

Kremlin spokesman Peskov was evasive when asked Friday whether Russian authorities planned to hold votes in those areas, saying that it would depend on the course of Russia’s offensive. He and other Russian officials have said repeatedly that it would be up to local residents to determine their future status.

Tatyana Stanovaya, founder and CEO of R.Politik, an independent think tank on Russian politics, thinks Putin doesn’t want to rush the referendums and run the risk of them being denounced as shams.

“He wants the referendum to be real, so that the West can see that, indeed, Russia was right, the people want to live with Russia,” Stanovaya said.

Ukrainian experts say it is not going to be easy for the Kremlin to rally genuine support in Ukraine’s south.

Volodymyr Fesenko, of the Kyiv-based Penta Center think tank, said residents of the southern regions identify as Ukrainians much more strongly than the people in areas closer to Russia or have been led by the Moscow-backed separatists for eight years.

“We already see that the occupying Russian administration is forced to tighten the screws and intensify repressions in the southern regions, since it cannot effectively control the protest sentiment,” Fesenko said. “And this causes a new wave of discontent among the population, which received nothing but Russian SIM cards and high Russian prices.”

Local residents echoed Fesenko’s sentiment.

Petro Kobernyk, 31, an activist with a nongovernmental organization who fled Kherson with his wife, said Russian repression began in the first days of the occupation.

	<p>“Hundreds of pro-Ukrainian activists, including my friends, are being held in the basements of security services,” Kobernyk said by phone. “Those who actively express their position are kidnapped and tortured, threatened and forced out of the region.”</p> <p>His claims could not be independently verified. Russian forces keep people in an “an information vacuum,” with Ukrainian websites no longer available, Kobernyk said.</p> <p>He described a bleak life in Kherson. With many stores shut down, the city “has turned into an endless market where people exchange goods for medicines and food.”</p> <p>But some in Ukraine have welcomed Russia’s actions.</p> <p>Vadim Romanova, a 17-year-old from the devastated port city of Mariupol said one of his dreams has come true.</p> <p>“I’ve wanted to live in Russia since I was little, and now I realize I don’t even have to move anywhere,” he said.</p>
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HEADLINE	<b>06/03 Can long Covid lead to death?</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.politico.com/news/2022/06/03/can-long-covid-lead-to-death-a-new-analysis-suggests-it-could-00036845">https://www.politico.com/news/2022/06/03/can-long-covid-lead-to-death-a-new-analysis-suggests-it-could-00036845</a>
GIST	<p>The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is analyzing more than 100 deaths that could be attributed to long Covid by looking at death certificates from across the country over the last two years, according to two people familiar with the matter.</p> <p>The National Center for Health Statistics, a division within the CDC, collects death certificates from states after they have been completed by a coroner, medical examiner or doctor. NCHS is now reviewing a batch of those files from 2020 and 2021.</p> <p>The review at the CDC, the details of which POLITICO obtained, is the first of its kind and indicates that long Covid and the health complications associated with it could lead to death. NCHS is set to publish preliminary data from its analysis in the coming days.</p> <p>It’s unclear whether the people who died had underlying health issues, whether long Covid was the cause of their deaths or whether it was a contributing factor.</p> <p>The new data comes as state and federal health officials work to understand the significance and severity of long Covid, which may affect as many as 30 percent of people who contract the virus, according to studies published in the Journal of the American Medical Association. Two years into the pandemic, relatively little is known about long Covid’s prevalence, how to diagnose it or the best practices for treatment.</p> <p>“The overall risk factors for mortality with long COVID are going to be important and evolving,” said Mady Hornig, a physician-scientist at the Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health who is researching long Covid. The CDC is still collecting and revising data, but NCHS has so far identified 60 death certificates that list long Covid or similar terminology — for example, “post-Covid” — in 2021 and another 60 during the first five months of 2022.</p> <p>A spokesperson for the CDC said the agency is “working on identifying any deaths attributed to ... long Covid-19” and plans to publish the numbers “soon.”</p> <p>There is no test for long Covid, and the CDC and the medical community have no official definition. But health care workers across the country are diagnosing patients who have previously contracted Covid-19 based on a wide-ranging set of symptoms that often include fatigue, shortness of breath and brain fog.</p>

Researchers and scientists have said that [between 10 and 30 percent](#) of people who have survived a Covid-19 infection will develop long Covid. A [CDC study released May 27](#) said one in five adults in the U.S. may develop the condition.

Still, it's difficult to determine exactly how many people in the country have long Covid. The condition is not easy to diagnose, especially without a universal definition. Long Covid can impact multiple organ systems and what may be a long Covid symptom for one patient may not be for another.

The muddled diagnosis process has made it harder for researchers to study long Covid. Dozens of hospitals and medical clinics are accepting patients with long Covid symptoms for treatment and trying to use that data to better understand the condition and why it manifests itself in some who have previously contracted the virus but not others. The National Institutes of Health is overseeing [the largest national study of long Covid](#).

In October 2021, after CDC approval, hospitals and medical facilities in the U.S. began tracking patients exhibiting long Covid symptoms with a specific identification known as an ICD-10 code. That coding system, used for most reportable illnesses, has helped researchers narrow which group of people to study. However, in almost all instances, long Covid sample populations are limited, constraining researchers' ability to understand how the condition impacts different people.

"There is a significant underdetection of long Covid," said Sairam Parthasarathy, chief of the pulmonary division at the University of Arizona's medical school and one of the leads on its long Covid study. "It ties into health literacy ... of someone being aware that they have a medical problem. If someone feels that they don't have a medical problem, sometimes they may not seek care."

Socioeconomic factors also come into play, Parthasarathy said, including whether someone has the resources and time to go to the doctor.

There is no set wording or terminology that hospitals use on death certificates — the CDC has yet to issue guidance. So, no official estimates exist for long Covid deaths.

Very few studies have examined the relationship between long Covid and mortality. But one November 2021 [study of European cancer patients](#), published in The Lancet, showed a relationship between long Covid and morbidity of the sample population. The study found that about 15 percent of those who survived Covid-19 had long Covid symptoms and their survival outcomes were significantly worse. It also found that those individuals were more likely to discontinue systemic anti-cancer therapy permanently.

"It certainly is possible and probable that someone who was sick from Covid develop complications after Covid and die of long Covid," said Jerry Krishnan, a pulmonary physician at the University of Illinois Chicago who is leading the institution's long Covid clinical study. "I have not seen the data. But I have heard that people have developed heart or lung or brain complications after having had Covid. And eventually they have died."

The CDC analysis is pulling death certificates that have words like "long Covid" or "post Covid," which could indicate that someone has died as a result of the condition. NCHS conducted a similar review of death certificates when the Covid-19 pandemic began in 2020. The CDC eventually issued a notice for health care providers to use a specific code for deaths that could be attributed to Covid-19. It allowed federal and local researchers to study how and whether the virus caused severe disease in some groups more than others.

Although there's no death certificate code for long Covid, Parthasarathy said it is possible to rely on what the medical community already knows about how severe disease from Covid-19 affects different populations to get a sense of long Covid's effects on those same groups of people.

"We know that people of color were disproportionately affected by Covid disease as opposed to just mild SARS-CoV-2 infection. And we know that people who are hospitalized with Covid are more likely to have

	long Covid,” he said, adding that he recently sat in on a presentation with NCHS that indicated people of color had a higher prevalence of long Covid. “When they showed those numbers ... it was like, ‘of course.’ We were able to connect the dots.”
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HEADLINE	<b>06/03 New car sales at ‘recessionary levels’</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.marketwatch.com/story/u-s-car-sales-at-recessionary-levels-as-inflation-rising-interest-rate-concerns-increase-rbc-says-11654191935">https://www.marketwatch.com/story/u-s-car-sales-at-recessionary-levels-as-inflation-rising-interest-rate-concerns-increase-rbc-says-11654191935</a>
GIST	<p>U.S. new-car sales dipped below an annualized 13 million vehicles in May, prompting analysts at RBC to say they are at “recessionary levels,” although demand is still heated and auto makers offer few if any incentives to those looking to buy a new vehicle.</p> <p>By RBC’s reckoning, the May U.S. light-vehicle seasonally adjusted annualized rate (SAAR) of sales came in at 12.8 million vehicles, below RBC’s forecast of 13.4 million vehicles and down from April’s 14.6 million.</p> <p>May had three fewer sales days, but May is also when sales seasonally start to pick up, the RBC analysts said.</p> <p>The market “appears increasingly concerned about the economy, inflation, rising interest rates and a recession,” the analysts, led by Joseph Spak, said in their note.</p> <p>“We have not yet seen any evidence of demand destruction. But, if a recession were to occur, it’s likely that ‘recessionary’ levels of demand are in the (12 million to 13 million) range.”</p> <p>RBC tweaked its demand forecast lower for new autos to 14.7 million units, which would be about 2% below 2021’s 15.1 million units, from a previous forecast of a rise to 15.2 million units. Their view is that “supply will still be challenging for a while.”</p> <p>Demand for new cars has outstripped supply as auto makers across the globe grapple with ongoing shortages and other supply-chain snags.</p> <p>Earlier Thursday, Ford Motor Co. reported a 4.5% drop in May total sales, including a 4.4% decline in sales of SUVs and a 1.4% decline in sales of pickup trucks.</p> <p>Ford said that the “continued global industry semiconductor chip shortage” remains an issue for the industry. The auto maker also unveiled plans to create <a href="#">more manufacturing jobs in the Midwest ahead of labor negotiations</a>.</p> <p>Also Thursday, analysts at Evercore ISI said that by their reckoning U.S. SAAR came in at about 12.7 million, down about 11% from April’s 14.3 million.</p> <p>North American production improved slightly, but vehicles in transit or partially built were likely responsible for a drag of about 1 million units.</p> <p>It is “hard to cite ANY consumer weakness from the print given ZERO inventory build (about 1.1 million units) and incentives near record low,” said the analysts, led by Chris McNally.</p> <p>The two other main U.S. car makers, General Motors Co. and Tesla Inc., do not report monthly sales, and only report quarterly numbers. The next reports on car sales from GM and Tesla are expected in early July.</p>
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HEADLINE	<b>06/03 May jobs report better than expected</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.cnbc.com/2022/06/03/jobs-report-may-2022.html">https://www.cnbc.com/2022/06/03/jobs-report-may-2022.html</a>



<b>GIST</b>	<p>The U.S. economy added 390,000 jobs in May, better than expected despite fears of an economic slowdown and a roaring pace of inflation, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported Friday.</p> <p>At the same time, the unemployment rate held at 3.6%, just above the lowest level since December 1969.</p> <p>Economists surveyed by Dow Jones had been looking for nonfarm payrolls to expand by 328,000 and the unemployment rate to edge lower to 3.5%.</p> <p>Average hourly earnings increased 0.3% from April, slightly lower than the 0.4% estimate. The year-over-year increase for wages of 5.2% was about in line with expectations.</p>
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<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>06/02 Beijing chafes at Moscow support requests</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/2022/06/02/china-support-russia-ukraine/">https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/2022/06/02/china-support-russia-ukraine/</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>Russian officials have raised increasingly frustrated requests for greater support during discussions with Beijing in recent weeks, calling on China to live up to its affirmation of a “no limits” partnership made weeks before the war in Ukraine began. But China’s leadership wants to expand assistance for Russia without running afoul of Western sanctions and has set limits on what it will do, according to Chinese and U.S. officials.</p> <p>Moscow has on at least two occasions pressed Beijing to offer new forms of economic support — exchanges that one Chinese official described as “tense.” The officials familiar with the talks spoke on the condition of anonymity because of the matter’s sensitivity.</p> <p>They declined to share specifics of Russia’s requests, but one official said it included maintaining “trade commitments” predating the Feb. 24 invasion of Ukraine, and financial and technological support now sanctioned by the United States and other countries.</p> <p>“China has made clear its position on the situation in Ukraine, and on the illegal sanctions against Russia,” said a person in Beijing with direct knowledge of the discussions. “We understand [Moscow’s] predicament. But we cannot ignore our own situation in this dialogue. China will always act in the best interest of the Chinese people.”</p> <p>China is in a bind as it seeks to help its most important strategic partner, which started a war that Beijing did not anticipate would now be entering its fourth month, Chinese and U.S. officials said. They said that President Xi Jinping has tasked his closest advisers to come up with ways to help Russia financially but without violating sanctions.</p> <p>“That has been difficult,” said a senior U.S. official. “And it is insufficient from the Russian standpoint.”</p> <p>The U.S. official said that China has tried to find “other opportunities” diplomatically, and through joint military exercises, to bolster Russia. Last week, Russia and China flew strategic bombers over the Sea of Japan and East China Sea while President Biden was in Tokyo, wrapping up his first trip to Asia. It was their first joint military exercise since the invasion of Ukraine and a pointed signal of the growing strategic partnership between Moscow and Beijing.</p> <p>“What China is trying to do is to be with Russia, signal neutrality publicly and not be compromised financially,” the U.S. official said. “Many of those goals are contradictory. It’s hard to fulfill them at the same time.”</p> <p>The Russian embassy in Washington did not respond to requests for comment.</p> <p>China has called for an end to the war but has refused to join a global consortium of countries in imposing sanctions on Moscow, instead laying blame for the conflict on the United States and NATO expansion in Europe.</p>

“For a long time, China and Russia have maintained normal cooperation in the fields of economy, trade and energy. The problem is not who will help Russia bypass the sanctions, but that normal economic and trade exchanges between Russia and China have been unnecessarily damaged,” said Liu Pengyu, spokesman for China’s embassy in Washington.

Liu added that the sanctions brought about a “lose-lose” situation for all parties and made “the already difficult world economy worse.”

Beijing’s public support for Russia has not faltered. China’s foreign minister, Wang Yi, on Wednesday reaffirmed its commitment to Moscow during a virtual meeting that was also attended by his Russian counterpart, Sergei Lavrov. Wang said China is willing to work with Russia to promote “real democracy,” alluding to a Chinese foreign policy goal of countering what it has described as U.S. hegemony in global politics.

Russia has not requested “weapons and ammunition” to support its war, the Chinese officials said, but declined to comment on whether Russia had requested other items that could be used in military operations including technology and supplies.

Secretary of State Antony Blinken said Wednesday that the United States has not seen any “systematic effort” by China to help Russia evade sanctions, nor has it seen any significant military support from China to Russia.

Blinken, speaking at a Council on Foreign Relations event commemorating the centennial of Foreign Affairs magazine, noted a “remarkable exodus of companies from Russia” as a result of the invasion — 7,800 companies, Blinken said, that “didn’t want their reputations to be at risk by doing business in Russia.”

The sanctions themselves did not drive the exodus, Blinken said. “It was really companies deciding on their own that they were not going to do business as usual in a country that was committing this kind of aggression. That’s something I think that China also has to factor in as it thinks about its relationship with Russia.”

China has balked at helping Russia evade sanctions, fearing the United States and its allies could cut China off from critical technology, including semiconductors and aerospace equipment, as well as target its financial system, a Beijing official said. Shipments of high-end Chinese technology to Russia — including smartphones, laptops and telecommunications equipment — have plummeted since the war began.

Nonetheless, the Chinese maintain that the U.S. and Western sanctions are illegal and that China will continue to do business with Russia. “The Chinese side is willing to fulfill its commitments to the Russian side, and is doing that when suitable conditions are met,” said the person in Beijing familiar with the discussions.

Asked about U.S. warnings that China would face consequences if it aids Russia, the person said, “The true reason is to sow discord between the Chinese side and the Russian side ... that will not happen. They will not succeed in undermining the China-Russian relationship.”

The Chinese official noted, however, that the war in Ukraine had dragged on much longer than expected, and Beijing has made clear to Moscow that an end to the conflict would allow China more leeway to oppose sanctions and grow business ties inside Russia in the wake of the exodus of foreign firms.

Bonnie Glaser, director of the Asia Program at the German Marshall Fund of the United States, said, “I think that the hope of the United States and Europe is that China will be forced to choose [between siding with Russia or with the West] and that it will make the right choice. But China has competing interests, and it will be virtually impossible to compel them to place their long-standing support for territorial integrity and sovereignty above their relationship with Russia.”



Yun Sun, co-director of the East Asia Program at the Stimson Center, said “The whole purpose of standing with Russia is they want Russia to work with them in strategic alignment against the U.S.” But by abiding by Western sanctions, after all the public support it has given Russia, Beijing runs the risk of undermining its relationship with Moscow.

A second Chinese official said that discussions among high-level officials have emphasized fast-tracking Russian ventures inside China to cement closer ties while minimizing the risk to Beijing. And open source documents show that Russian-linked projects inside China are forging ahead.

Domestic Chinese bidding documents show that financing for new construction on the strategically significant Russia-China Eastern Route gas pipeline has continued since the war began, with fresh purchases for materials and machinery earmarked for the southern leg of the project. It is expected to provide 18.9 billion cubic meters of Russian gas to China’s economically vibrant Yangtze Delta region by 2025.

China’s Institute of Atomic Energy in April also purchased new services and equipment from Russian nuclear engineering firm OKBM Afrikantov for the Russian-built China Experimental Fast Reactor (CEFR) nuclear project near Beijing, documents show. In the same period, it purchased new supplies and services from Russian state atomic energy firm Rosatom for the Tianwan Nuclear Power Plant, a landmark Sino-Russian project under construction in China’s Jiangsu province.

Municipal and provincial governments have also been directed by Beijing to launch projects to expand trade and financial ties with Russia, according to the Beijing officials and domestic bidding documents filed in China.

“Based on the comparative advantages of location and resources, we will analyze the favorable factors and obstacles of regional cooperation between Dalian and the Russian Far East ... so as to promote the high-quality economic development,” stated one May 19 document outlining funding for research into investment opportunities in Russia for the northeastern Chinese manufacturing and port hub of Dalian, which is located close to the Russian border.

Chinese officials also said senior leadership had called for new investment and trade with Belarus, which has been targeted with financial and defense sanctions linked to its supporting role in Russia’s invasion of Ukraine.

Bidding documents and contracts issued in April and May show Chinese companies continued to make shipments to the China-Belarus Industrial Park, a logistic hub outside Minsk, Belarus, that was created as part of strategic agreement between the two countries. Over half of the companies in the park are financed by China, according to data released in Chinese state media in May.

Further bidding documents released on May 20 outline plans by a subsidiary of state-owned technology giant China Electronics Technology Group (CETC) to launch a \$30 million project for a China-Belarus joint research laboratory that will study and test of electromagnetic pulse (EMP) equipment — a technology with military applications. The project includes an 11,000-square-foot research base and an array of EMP equipment.

CETC and its subsidiaries have already been placed on the U.S. Commerce Department’s Entity List, which restricts exports to listed companies, for their cooperation with the Chinese military.

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HEADLINE	06/03 Putin digging-in for long war of attrition
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2022/06/03/russia-putin-economy-attrition-war/">https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2022/06/03/russia-putin-economy-attrition-war/</a>

Russian President Vladimir Putin is digging in for a long war of attrition over Ukraine and will be relentless in trying to use economic weapons, such as a blockade of Ukrainian grain exports, to whittle away Western support for Kyiv, according to members of Russia's economic elite.

The Kremlin has seized on recent signs of hesitancy by some European governments as an indication the West could lose focus in seeking to counter Russia's invasion of Ukraine, especially as global energy costs surge following the imposition of sanctions on Moscow.

Putin "believes the West will become exhausted," said one well-connected Russian billionaire, speaking on the condition of anonymity for fear of retribution. Putin had not expected the West's initially strong and united response, "but now he is trying to reshape the situation and he believes that in the longer term he will win," the billionaire said. Western leaders are vulnerable to election cycles, and "he believes public opinion can flip in one day."

The embargo on Russia's seaborne oil exports announced by the European Union this week — hailed by Charles Michel, president of the European Council, as putting maximum "pressure on Russia to end the war" — would "have little influence over the short term," said one Russian official close to Moscow diplomatic circles, also speaking on the condition of anonymity for fear of retribution. "The Kremlin mood is that we can't lose — no matter what the price."

The Kremlin has pointed out that the E.U.'s move has only provoked a further surge in global energy prices and says it will seek to divert supplies to other markets in Asia, despite a ban on insuring Russian shipments that was also imposed by the E.U. and Britain.

The populations of E.U. countries "are feeling the impact of these sanctions more than we are," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said in an interview with The Washington Post. "The West has made mistake after mistake, which has led to growing crises, and to say that this is all because of what is going on in Ukraine and what Putin is doing is incorrect."

This posture suggests that the Kremlin believes it can outlast the West in weathering the impact of economic sanctions. Putin has little choice but to continue the war in hopes the Ukraine grain blockade will "lead to instability in the Middle East and provoke a new flood of refugees," said Sergei Guriev, former chief economist at the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

The Kremlin's aggressive stance seems to reflect the thinking of Nikolai Patrushev, the hawkish head of Russia's Security Council, who served with Putin in the Leningrad KGB and is increasingly seen as a hard-line ideologue driving Russia's war in Ukraine. He is one of a handful of close security advisers believed by Moscow insiders to have access to Putin. In three vehemently anti-Western interviews given to Russian newspapers since the invasion, the previously publicity-shy Patrushev has declared Europe is on the brink of "a deep economic and political crisis" in which rising inflation and falling living standards were already impacting the mood of Europeans, while a fresh migrant crisis would create new security threats.

"The world is gradually falling into an unprecedented food crisis. Tens of millions of people in Africa or in the Middle East will turn out to be on the brink of starvation — because of the West. In order to survive, they will flee to Europe. I'm not sure Europe will survive the crisis," Patrushev told Russian state newspaper Rossiiskaya Gazeta in one of the interviews.

In another interview last week to the popular Argumenty and Fakty tabloid, Patrushev said Russia is "not rushing to meet deadlines" in its military campaign in Ukraine.

The Russian military has been gradually making gains in Ukraine's eastern Donbas region, and rather than seeking an immediate and decisive battle, Putin believes time is on his side, the Russian billionaire said. Putin "is a very patient guy. He can afford to wait six to nine months," the billionaire said. "He can control Russian society much more tightly than the West can control its society."

Josep Borrell, high representative for foreign affairs and security policy in the European Union, arrives for the second day of an E.U. summit in Brussels on May 31. (Johanna Geron/Reuters)

The weeks-long diplomatic haggling over the terms of the E.U. oil embargo was seen by the Kremlin as a sign of faltering western resolve, economists and the Russian official said. Phone calls over the weekend by French President Emmanuel Macron and German Chancellor Olaf Scholz's to Putin about ways to lift the blockade on Ukraine's ports will have further bolstered that view. When Western leaders call Putin and seek to do a deal, "it means he thinks he has leverage," a former U.S. government official said.

The Kremlin has insisted the blockade on Ukrainian grain exports is because of Ukrainian mining of the Black Sea — a claim denied by Kyiv — while Peskov said Western sanctions were also preventing grain shipments from being dispatched.

Russia's potential losses due to the E.U. ban on its seaborne oil exports could be minimal, said Sergei Aleksashenko, a former deputy chairman of the Russian central bank, who now lives in exile in the United States. If Russia is able to divert the entire seaborne volume to India and China, Russian losses as a result of the ban could total only \$10 billion, he said.

Putin's economic advisers will "tell him what the estimated loss is from the embargo, and he will laugh quietly," Aleksashenko said. "He is not changing his course."

The E.U. embargo should be seen as "only a first step" in efforts to cut off the Kremlin's hard currency earnings, said Edward Fishman, adjunct professor of international and public affairs at Columbia University and a former official with the U.S. State Department.

Several current and former senior Western officials have been discussing proposals for the United States and E.U. to form a cartel and impose a price cap on Russian oil, possibly at \$30 or \$40 per barrel. This step could be more effective than the E.U. ban and help drive down global prices, Guriev and Fishman said. Under the proposal, the United States could impose secondary sanctions on anyone buying Russian oil at a price over the cap, they said.

Italian Prime Minister Mario Draghi first floated the idea of creating a cartel of oil consumers at a meeting with President Biden, while the European Commission is now examining Draghi's proposal for a potential gas price cap.

Putin has declared that "the economic blitzkrieg" against Russia has failed, and on the surface, the economy has been cushioned against the initial shock of Western sanctions by the inflow of nearly \$1 billion in revenue per day from oil and gas exports to Europe before the E.U. embargo on seaborne oil. Thanks to capital controls and orders that Russian exporters sell half their hard currency earnings to the state, the ruble has strengthened to prewar highs.

But Russia's Central Bank chief, Elvira Nabiullina, has warned that the full impact of Western sanctions is yet to be felt. A ban on high-tech imports is only just beginning to bite, while shortages of some goods are only now beginning to be seen. Inflation is set to exceed 20 percent, and Russia is facing its deepest recession in 30 years. Putin's attempt to protect the population against inflation, estimated at 18 percent, by ordering a 10 percent hike in pensions and the minimum wage falls far short.

With risks growing for all sides, "it is going to be a war of attrition from the economic, political and moral point of view," the Russian official said. "Everyone is waiting for autumn," when the impact of sanctions will hit the hardest, he said.

So far, however, with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky estimating Kyiv needs \$7 billion in aid a month just to keep the country running, Putin appears to be betting on the West blinking first, the former U.S. government official said. Putin's "goal of subjugating Ukraine and eventually placing a Russian flag in Kyiv has not changed."

HEADLINE	06/02 Medicare, Social Security outlook improves
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.washingtonpost.com/health/2022/06/02/medicare-social-security-trustees-report/">https://www.washingtonpost.com/health/2022/06/02/medicare-social-security-trustees-report/</a>
GIST	<p>The financial outlook for the Medicare and Social Security programs <a href="#">slightly improved</a> this year due to a stronger and faster economic recovery than predicted in 2021, but both programs still face future insolvency, according to an annual government report released Thursday.</p> <p>A key Medicare trust fund that covers many hospital bills for seniors and those with disabilities will be unable to pay full benefits starting in 2028, two years later than reported last year.</p> <p>The Social Security Trust Fund, which covers benefits to retirees, workers' survivors and people with disabilities, will be able to pay full benefits until 2035, gaining an additional year beyond what was projected last year, according to the report issued by trustees for Medicare and Social Security.</p> <p>But the trustees warned about the future of the huge entitlement programs, expressing concern that both face long-term financing shortfalls. The projections in the report for Medicare, which covers nearly 64 million people, indicate a "need for substantial changes" to address the program's fiscal challenges, the report states.</p> <p>"It's just dangerous that we've let it get to this point," said Maya MacGuineas, president of the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget, a nonpartisan think tank. "What's concerning is if Congress has any response" there are "no signs that they are planning to make those necessary changes."</p> <p>The trustees report has <a href="#">regularly sounded</a> a note of caution on the fragility of both programs, which are intended to help keep older Americans out of poverty. The aging of the U.S. population, combined with increased longevity, has compounded the financial pressure, yet action by Congress is unlikely amid fierce divisions over how to solve the problems.</p> <p>The trustees assumed the <a href="#">coronavirus</a> pandemic, which initially delayed and changed how some older adults receive care, wouldn't have a long-term effect on the projections for either program's finances. But the report notes there is no consensus on what the lasting impact of the pandemic might be, and the intertwined paths of the economy and the health crisis have grown more uncertain since the trustees developed their assumptions in February.</p> <p>One question is whether the long-term effects from covid, including new onset diabetes, heart disease and <a href="#">long covid</a> — a condition linked to fatigue, brain fog and other symptoms — might increase costs for the health system down the road.</p> <p>The pandemic has hit more vulnerable populations, such as <a href="#">older adults</a>, particularly hard, leading to hundreds of thousands of deaths. The Medicare population also has lower rates of costly chronic diseases than before the pandemic, leading to projections of reduced costs until roughly 2028, the trustees said.</p> <p>Administration officials told reporters the improved outlook for both programs reflect progress made to boost the economy after the pandemic began.</p> <p>Medicare spending for services other than dealing with the coronavirus, particularly elective care, was also significantly lower than expected in both 2020 and 2021, the report notes. Detecting and treating covid led to increased costs, but they have been more than offset by a reduction in use of other services, according to an administration official, who spoke to reporters on the condition of anonymity due to rules set by the administration.</p> <p>The insolvency of the trust funds doesn't mean the programs will no longer operate. If the Social Security Trust Fund is depleted in 2035, then the government would pay 80 percent of scheduled benefits. And if the Medicare trust fund for inpatient care runs short, then the program would be able to pay 90 percent of expected costs in 2028, the report said.</p>

	<p>“The shift [in projected insolvency] from 2026 to 2028 buys more time for policymakers to come up with solutions, but also confirms the need for action to keep the [Medicare] program on a solid financial footing in the years ahead,” Tricia Neuman, a senior vice president at the Kaiser Family Foundation and a Biden nominee for the Medicare and Social Security Board of Trustees, wrote in an email.</p> <p>A pair of top Republican leaders on the influential House Energy and Commerce Committee called for swift bipartisan action to protect Medicare in a statement, though they did not offer specific actions.</p> <p>Meanwhile, House Ways and Means Chair Richard E. Neal (D-Mass.) countered that “Democrats will continue to fight to ensure that these essential programs remain strong, through good times and bad.”</p>
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HEADLINE	<b>06/02 Oil companies exit leases in Arctic refuge</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.washingtonpost.com/climate-environment/2022/06/02/arctic-national-wildlife-refuge-drilling/">https://www.washingtonpost.com/climate-environment/2022/06/02/arctic-national-wildlife-refuge-drilling/</a>
GIST	<p>Three major oil companies have given up opportunities to explore for oil in Alaska’s <a href="#">Arctic National Wildlife Refuge</a>, after the industry and Republican politicians have spent decades working to gain access to the sensitive region.</p> <p>Regenerate Alaska, a division of an Australian firm and the only oil company to directly acquire a tract on the refuge’s nearly 1.6 million-acre coastal plain, canceled its lease last month, after Chevron and Hilcorp, two other major oil companies, had also jettisoned their claims.</p> <p>The exits make it far less likely that drilling will take place soon in a vast, unspoiled landscape that has achieved iconic status among environmentalists and has been fought over for half a century. An Anchorage real estate investor and the state-owned Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority still hold leases there, but industry analysts say they lack the financial power and expertise to develop the remote area on their own.</p> <p>The Anchorage Daily News first reported the three firms’ decision to pull out of the refuge.</p> <p>While Republicans enacted legislation in 2017 mandating two major lease sales in the refuge by the end of 2024, a coalition of Indigenous rights and environmental groups has launched a campaign to pressure corporations against investing in any developments there. The 20 million-acre preserve hosts hundreds of thousands of migrating caribou and waterfowl each year and provides critical habitat for <a href="#">the Southern Beaufort Sea’s remaining polar bears</a>.</p> <p>“This is positive news for the climate and the human rights of Indigenous people whose survival depends on a healthy, thriving calving ground for the Porcupine Caribou Herd, and further proves that the oil industry recognizes drilling on sacred lands is bad business,” the Wilderness Society’s Alaska state director, Karlin Itchoak, said in a statement.</p> <p>Five major U.S. banks — Bank of America, Goldman Sachs, Citigroup, JPMorgan Chase and Wells Fargo — and a growing list of insurance companies have stopped giving financing for the Arctic oil business.</p> <p>“It seems all the oil companies with leases there have concluded that drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is unwise after all,” said Erik Grafe, deputy managing attorney in Earthjustice’s Alaska regional office. Grafe, who for years has been involved in litigation to block oil and gas development in the refuge, said, “We are glad that these companies may finally have seen the light, concluding that investing in Arctic oil is a bad deal on a planet that urgently needs to shift away from fossil fuels.”</p> <p>A year ago the Biden administration <a href="#">suspended the leases</a> that the Interior Department’s Bureau of Land Management awarded two weeks before President Donald Trump left office, saying the agency did an “insufficient analysis” of the impact of drilling in the environmentally sensitive region.</p>

However the state development agency, which bought seven leases covering 366,000 acres just before Trump left office, is still trying to get permits to do seismic studies and preparatory work for drilling in the refuge.

Alan Weitzner, the Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority's executive director, said in an interview Thursday that he is not surprised the oil companies decided to leave the refuge in the face of repeated obstacles from the federal government, which "creates a time sink for corporations within that area."

"In my mind it's very unfortunate that these major investors in the state of Alaska are not being allowed to continue to pursue development, and are being really pushed to look elsewhere, in large part outside of the U.S.," he added. "There are delays and just outright denials of requests for permitting to ultimately pursue the activities that you need to do."

Sen. Dan Sullivan (R-Alaska) said that Biden administration actions were to blame for the departure of the companies.

"The Biden administration continues to tell the American people that they are doing all they can to bring down energy prices," he said. "Then they take actions that do the exact opposite, especially in Alaska."

Sullivan added that "this creates enormous uncertainty, driving away and chilling investment in these resource development projects, including ANWR, which our country desperately needs."

There are many obstacles to drilling in the Arctic refuge. There are no roads or facilities, so building the infrastructure to support oil exploration would be costly. There has long been strong opposition to drilling in the refuge, which has only intensified as climate change worsens, driven by burning of fossil fuels. The Alaskan Arctic has warmed at least three times more than other parts of the country, posing new risks to oil infrastructure on the North Slope as permafrost melts.

"If you look at project proposals in other parts of the Arctic, they're using things like chillers to freeze the permafrost so they can drill more," said Jenny Rowland-Shea, deputy director for public lands at the Center for American Progress, a liberal think tank. "It's not getting any colder in the Arctic. It's only getting harder to do things like drill, and it's a vicious cycle."

Alaska Native groups with ancestral ties to the refuge celebrated the oil companies' withdrawal from what they consider sacred territory.

"These exits clearly demonstrate that international companies recognize what we have known all along: drilling in the Arctic Refuge is not worth the economic risk and liability that results from development on sacred lands without the consent of Indigenous Peoples," the Gwich'in Steering Committee said in a statement. "The Gwich'in are united against any development of the Coastal Plain of the Arctic Refuge."

Some oil industry analysts see the departure from Alaska as a sign of increased fiscal discipline by oil companies as renewable energy becomes a more prominent focus for them.

The investment advisory firm Raymond James did a survey of 50 large oil and gas companies and found that global capital spending remains 5 percent below pre-pandemic levels. It also found that considerations of ESG — environment, sustainability and governance — is driving these companies toward low-carbon energy such as wind and solar, said the firm's senior energy analyst Pavel Molchanov.

"Insofar as these companies are still drilling, the focus is on the best-established, lowest-risk opportunities: West Texas, North Dakota, Brazil, Norway," he said. "There is practically no appetite for high-risk exploration in places such as Alaska."



Regenerate Alaska, which had purchased a 23,000-acre lease during the Trump administration's sale, requested a refund of its fees and rental payments. Last month BLM complied with this request, according to an Interior spokesman.

In addition to the state agency, a company called Knik Arm Services, a real estate investing firm formed in 2020 by investor Mark Graber holds a lease on the coastal plain.

Many Alaskans remain hopeful that exploration will continue.

"Alaskans haven't given up on ANWR and the State is still involved," former lieutenant governor Mead Treadwell said in an email. "ANWR has been a long fight, but if government that leases land doesn't support exploration and development afterwards, it discourages investors. That's why the state has taken the fight on as its own."

Development will also continue in other parts of the state, noted Treadwell, a business investor and Republican who has also served as chair of the United States Arctic Research Commission.

Interior officials are currently reviewing a proposal by ConocoPhillips to build the [Willow project](#), a network of drill sites and a production facility in the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska, to the west of the Arctic refuge.

Environmental groups said they remained committed to scaling back such development.

"While Chevron and others may have changed their minds where it comes to the Arctic Refuge, others remain bent on expanding oil development in the Arctic," Grafe said.

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HEADLINE	<b>06/02 Pandemic disrupted learning for teens</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.washingtonpost.com/technology/2022/06/02/pandemic-remote-teens-learning/">https://www.washingtonpost.com/technology/2022/06/02/pandemic-remote-teens-learning/</a>
GIST	<p>In many ways, the switch to virtual learning was an unexpected, unplanned experiment that was conducted on millions of school-age children. When the <a href="#">coronavirus</a> pandemic struck the United States in early 2020, schools across the country closed their classrooms, handed out laptops and tablets, and gave educators a crash course in holding squirming kids' attention over apps like Zoom.</p> <p>More than two years later, there's new information about the impact that switch has had on teens between 13 and 17 years old and their parents. In a survey released Thursday by the Pew Research Center, there are signs that some things are returning to the way they were before the pandemic, but some teenagers feel left behind. The survey found that most kids have kept close relationships with friends and families over the pandemic and that they prefer going to school in person more than remotely. However, there are notable differences in how the pandemic, specifically remote learning, has affected Black and Hispanic teenagers and lower-income families.</p> <p>"One thing that stands out is we tend to see a difference in teens' experiences by their household income," said Colleen McClain, a Pew research associate who focuses on Internet and technology research.</p> <p>Some of the starkest differences are around completing homework, known as the "homework gap." Some teens are falling behind in school work, often due to a lack of adequate technology to complete assignments at home. Twenty-two percent of teenagers said they have had to finish homework on their phones, and 12 percent said they sometimes can't complete their homework because they don't have the technology to do it. A lack of computers, smartphones and reliable home Internet are all contributing factors. Twenty percent of low-income students who live in a household with an annual income of \$30,000 or less said they don't have a computer at home.</p> <p>Childhood experts had worried about the impact of isolation on teen relationships during the early part of the pandemic. About half of teens reported feeling as close or closer to their parents than before the coronavirus crisis, and 49 percent said they had managed to maintain their close relationships with friends.</p>

However, a third of teenagers said they were less connected with people outside that inner circle, such as classmates. These relationships were another area where Hispanic and Black teens reported some less-positive experiences. They were more likely than White teenagers to feel less close to their friends.

Even the teens who managed well while learning remotely prefer being back in classrooms full time, the survey found. A majority of all teenagers said they prefer to attend school entirely in person, while 9 percent said they prefer to be fully remote.

While there's a stronger preference for in-person learning, there are some notable differences between groups. Black teens are less likely to say they want to only go to school in person since the pandemic, while Hispanic teens are more likely to want a hybrid setup. Teens living in lower-income households are less likely to want to go back to school entirely in person, with 15 percent saying they would prefer to attend school completely online.

The study comes just as most students are wrapping up the school year and are primarily back to in-person learning. Eighty percent of students said they had attended school completely in person in the past month, while only 8 percent said they had been entirely online.

While many of the changes required early in the pandemic were temporary, some of the technology requirements have stuck around — and not without consequences. [A recent study](#) by Human Rights Watch found that of 164 educational apps it examined, nearly 90 percent were designed to collect and share data about students with advertising technology companies. The increase in smartphone usage among students, particularly teens, has led some educators to try to incorporate those devices into their lesson plans. That can leave students without access to pricey smartphones behind, too.

Educators across the board have worried about whether remote learning would leave some kids behind.

The parents of teenagers have mixed reviews of their various schools' approaches to virtual schooling, and they tended to be more satisfied with it than the children themselves. Among parents, 39 percent say they're satisfied with how schools handled remote learning, while only 28 percent of teens said the same.

The majority of teenagers also aren't worried that they've fallen behind during the pandemic, while 28 percent of parents say they're very or extremely worried about their kids falling behind because of the coronavirus crisis.

"There's not a one-size-fits-all experience for teens when it comes to experiencing school during the pandemic," said Monica Anderson, associate director of research at Pew.

The new report is based on a survey of 1,316 pairs of U.S. teens and their parents conducted April 14 to May 4, 2022, Pew said.

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HEADLINE	06/02 Summer of blackouts? Power grid distress
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2022/06/02/blackout-states-summer-heat/">https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2022/06/02/blackout-states-summer-heat/</a>
GIST	<p>The nation's power grid is under stress like never before, with regulators warning that the kind of rolling outages that are now familiar to California and Texas could be far more widespread as hot summer weather arrives.</p> <p>A large swath of the Midwest that has enjoyed stable electricity for decades is now <a href="#">wrestling with forecasts</a> that it lacks the power needed to get through a heat wave. The regional grid is short the amount of energy needed to power 3.7 million homes.</p> <p>New Mexico's attorney general is preparing for "worst case scenarios" after a regional utility warned of possible blackouts. North Dakota regulators advised the state to be ready for rolling outages, Arkansas</p>

officials are preparing emergency energy conservation measures, and power companies in Arizona are already sounding alarms about next year.

While America's power grid has been showing signs of distress for years, the sudden warnings have surprised even those who were sounding an alarm. That's because extreme weather precipitated by climate change and the early retirement of fossil fuel plants has accelerated the destabilization of the grid — a fragile collection of transfer stations and transmission lines already challenged by a lack of investment.

The situation has unnerved energy experts, who caution an unstable grid could set back plans to move rapidly toward a climate-friendlier economy. The plans rely heavily on most of the nation shifting to electric vehicles and plug-in home appliances such as stoves and water heaters, which will increase demands on the power system.

"We've been issuing warnings about the grid for a number of years," said Mark Denzler, chief executive of the Illinois Manufacturers' Association. "But the swiftness with which this has happened has caught people by surprise. They didn't think we would be having these issues for a couple of years." In the event of outages, he said, heavy industrial users are the most likely to experience disruption, as utilities work to avoid cutting off electricity to residences in periods of extreme heat or cold.

The worries of rolling blackouts threaten to compound the stress and anxiety of the shaky economy, the enduring pandemic and energy shortages exacerbated by the war in Ukraine. And it has led to warnings in unexpected places.

Southern Illinois is among the most vulnerable places in the country heading into the summer, according to a newly published forecast by the North American Electric Reliability Corp., a regulatory authority that monitors risks to the grid.

The area, along with large parts of Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota and other states linked to the regional grid, has been put on notice in the forecast that it is facing a "high risk of energy emergencies during peak summer conditions." A major reason is that some of the coal plants that regulators assumed would keep running for another year or two are instead coming offline. Some plant operators are choosing to shut down rather than invest in upgrades for coal plants that do not fit with states' and the federal government's long-term goals for clean energy.

"We are seeing these retirements occur at a faster pace than expected," said Jim Robb, chief executive of the regulatory authority. "The economics aren't great, so coal plant operators are saying 'uncle.'"

As demand across the Midwest is increasing, the amount of power available to the Midcontinent Independent System Operator grid that services a large swath of it has dropped, leading regulators to warn that [outages could accompany extreme summer weather](#).

Retiring coal plants are just one of many challenges putting unprecedented stress on the nation's electricity network.

"It's a soup of things," Robb said. "The grid is transforming. We are putting on a lot of new resources and learning how they behave." That is compounded, Robb said, by prolonged stretches of extreme weather, the inability of utilities to get badly needed transmission lines built as they wrestle with land-use disputes, and difficulties delivering natural gas supplies to the power plants that are a crucial backstop to wind and solar energy when the sun is not shining and the wind is not blowing.

Some political leaders and utilities in the Midwest are assuring residents that their connections to neighboring grids can provide a backup of energy to avoid blackouts if the Midcontinent system gets overstressed. But energy experts warn those power transfers may not be available in the event of a prolonged heat wave that stretches across many states, as California learned when part of its grid became overwhelmed in the summer of 2020.

“They were counting on transfers,” Robb said. “But it was hot in Seattle, in Vancouver, in Portland. It was hot everywhere. Nobody had extra power to give.”

California has already put its residents on notice that a similar scenario could play out again this summer. State forecasts show that during peak summer periods, California will be short about the amount of electricity it takes to power 1.3 million homes.

Western and Southwestern states are also confronting fresh challenges with their power supply as they head into summer. Among the biggest is a drought already disrupting the hydroelectricity systems that are key to delivering reliable power to large areas of North America. In the event that extreme heat pushes up demand in the West again this summer, a hydroelectricity shortage threatens energy emergencies across the Western Interconnection grid, which serves 80 million people across 14 states and parts of Canada and Mexico. Parched rivers and reservoirs threaten to leave inadequate water flowing through the plants.

Drought is also a worry at nuclear and fossil fuel plants, where low water levels can impede the cooling process that is essential to consistent power generation.

“We are in uncharted territory with respect to water,” said Michael Wara, an energy scholar at Stanford University. “It has all kinds of implications.”

Texas, meanwhile, is still struggling to shore up an [embattled power system](#) that the state runs independently of [the national grid](#). The state’s challenge was underscored in May — a relatively temperate month in Texas — when energy officials [urged consumers](#) to turn their thermostats up to 78 degrees and avoid the use of large household appliances during a brief period of unseasonably warm weather.

“For such a free-market, capitalist-oriented state, you have to see the irony in this,” said Ed Hirs, an energy economist at the University of Houston. “The last time I was told to turn my thermostat up to 78 degrees it was by [Jimmy Carter](#).”

Drought in Texas threatens to inhibit the operation of steam-generated, or thermal, power plants, according to the North American Electric Reliability Corp., potentially triggering power shortages in the event of extreme heat.

“We’ve let our infrastructure decay to the point where we have these failures,” Hirs said. “Somebody has to stand up and start doing something. We have not even addressed what will happen to the grid when every two-car family switches to one plug-in Ford F150 [pickup truck] and one plug-in passenger car. The grid can’t even handle what we have now.”

The shift to wind and solar power is playing a role in the stability issues, but there is [intense debate](#) over whether the underlying problem is that the transition is happening too quickly or too slowly.

“Everybody has a good sense of where we want to go in terms of decarbonizing the fleet,” Midcontinent chief executive John Bear said during a press event hosted by the U.S. Energy Association. “We are moving in that direction. Unfortunately, we are moving in that direction quite quickly and I am worried about the transition.” He said the storage technologies needed to balance deployment of wind and solar energy are still in development, while at the same time the coal and gas plants that can provide more consistent power are either coming offline or not operating as reliably as they once did because their owners are reluctant to invest in upgrades.

But many other energy experts argue that getting reliable backup power in place to facilitate the transition is not a matter of waiting for new technology, but making the proper investments now.

“The problem is there is nobody in charge,” said M. Granger Morgan, a professor of engineering at Carnegie Mellon University. The national power grid, he said, is a patchwork of regional systems designed

	<p>to be guided by market demand in each area. Federal regulators have limited authority over it, and many states have constrained their own power to manage energy resources as part of a deregulation push that took hold in the 1990s.</p> <p>“We don’t have the national regulatory arrangements and incentives in place to implement this energy transition in a coherent and rapid-enough manner,” Granger said. Energy experts point to transmission lines as an area in which the current system is failing. They are sorely needed to bring power generated at solar and wind farms in rural locations across state lines to energy-thirsty cities. But state regulators have been slow to approve them amid protests from property owners who don’t want the power lines on their land.</p> <p>The problem is high on the list of priorities at the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, which is working on rules intended to help clear the path for more lines to get built.</p> <p>Manufacturers in Illinois have been worrying about all of these issues around the grid for some time. Now they face a more immediate challenge: making it through the summer.</p> <p>“We’re supportive of a cleaner, greener future, but we need to have proper on- and off-ramps,” Denzler said.</p>
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HEADLINE	<b>06/02 Welcome to the Great Reinfection</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.wired.com/story/welcome-to-the-great-reinfection/">https://www.wired.com/story/welcome-to-the-great-reinfection/</a>
GIST	<p><b>IF YOU’RE UNFORTUNATE</b> enough to have had an intimate encounter with the dreaded Sars-CoV-2 virus, I’m afraid your dalliance with it might not have been your last. Get ready for round two (and three, and maybe four—maybe ad infinitum). Welcome to the Great Reinfection.</p> <p>In the early months of the pandemic, reinfections were a remarkable rarity, even <a href="#">making global news</a> when discovered. “When the pandemic first started, everybody assumed that once you got it, you were done,” says Juliet Pulliam, director of the South African DSI-NRF Centre for Epidemiological Modelling and Analysis at Stellenbosch University.</p> <p>Two years and some change in, that novelty has largely evaporated. A perfect storm of waning immunity, loosened restrictions, and an extremely transmissible variant making the rounds has meant reinfections are the new normal for many. But even setting aside these factors, it makes sense that there are now more reinfections than ever. At this stage of the pandemic, repeat infections would always have been more common than before, owing to the sheer number of people who’ve had Covid-19. You can’t get reinfected unless you’ve already been infected in the first place.</p> <p>Beyond that basic math, it’s not really surprising that reinfections are happening, says Aubree Gordon, an infectious disease epidemiologist at the University of Michigan. “The virus has changed a lot,” she says. If you were infected with an earlier variant, Omicron is like that variety wearing a wig and makeup—making it largely unrecognizable to our bodies’ immune defenses and harder to stave off.</p> <p>But if reinfections are now part and parcel of the future of the pandemic, just how common are they? An exact number is hard to pin down, thanks to a nosedive in testing and reporting that has made tracking all kinds of Sars-CoV-2 infections much trickier. Plus, not everyone defines a reinfection the same way; health authorities in the UK, for example, require at least 90 days to elapse between a first and second infection for this to count as a reinfection. Others, like the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, use a shorter 60-day minimum between infections.</p> <p>In England, close to <a href="#">900,000 possible reinfections</a> have been identified since the beginning of the pandemic. Of those, over 10,000 were a third infection, and almost 100 were a fourth.</p> <p>Pulliam’s own work has tried to put a number on how many infections are actually reinfections. She and her team found that as of last week, around 15 percent of current infections in South Africa are</p>



reinfections. “And that is almost certainly an underestimate,” she cautions, “because our surveillance isn’t great, and we probably missed a lot of people’s first infections.” But to answer just how prevalent reinfections are—in the grand scheme of things—Pulliam uses two words to sum it up: fairly rare.

She and her team have also investigated just how much Omicron has shaken things up. They started monitoring reinfections towards the end of the Beta wave in South Africa (which peaked in January 2021), looking at over 100,000 suspected reinfections. They found that the protection an initial infection offered against reinfection stayed the same all through the Beta wave and all through the Delta wave that peaked the following July. And then Omicron hit. The risk of reinfection steadily rose and [stabilized at a higher number](#).

South Africa, Pulliam says, is uniquely placed to study reinfection, serving as a barometer for the rest of the world’s reinfection future, given that Omicron has already made its way through most of the population. “If what’s going on in South Africa is any indication, it’s that probably people are going to be reinfected over the course of years,” she says. Reinfection, Pulliam believes, is going to be a normal part of the way we live in the future.

Other studies have shown just how much Omicron has changed the reinfection calculation. According to data from the UK, the risk of being reinfected with Covid-19 was about [eight times higher](#) after Omicron became the reigning variant in the country compared with when Delta held the crown. Another paper from Imperial College London published in December 2021 found that Omicron was [five times more](#) likely to reinfect people than the previously dominant Delta variant.

Laith J. Abu-Raddad, an infectious disease epidemiologist at Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar, has investigated how much a previous infection protects against a future one—and how much this has shifted because of Omicron. In a [study](#) published in March, he found that pre-Omicron, the effectiveness of a Covid infection against a reinfection hovered at about 90 percent—in both the vaccinated and unvaccinated. Post-Omicron that number dropped to about 50 percent. Reinfections, he says, “are becoming an accepted reality.”

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HEADLINE	<b>06/02 Ukraine: environmental damage by Russia</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.vice.com/en/article/v7d55x/zelenskyy-slams-russia-for-damage-to-environment-ukraine">https://www.vice.com/en/article/v7d55x/zelenskyy-slams-russia-for-damage-to-environment-ukraine</a>
GIST	<p>BRATISLAVA, Slovakia — Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy told a room full of NATO and government officials from neighboring countries that Russia’s war machine isn’t just a human horror, but an environmental disaster for his country.</p> <p>“Let us again remember the significance of the Danube river, this is the source of prosperity for various cities: Bratislava, Vienna, Budapest,” said Zelenskyy from an undisclosed location in Ukraine during the opening ceremony for <a href="#">GLOBSEC</a>—an annual security conference in Bratislava, Slovakia. The conference brings together Western military brass and heads of state from the region, which for the first time in its nearly twenty-year existence is being held with a war next door.</p> <p>“To make sure the Danube remains clean and safe to ensure that its economic potential, including transport potential, is in full swing,” said Zelenskyy, referring again to the second-longest river flowing only feet away from conference goers. “We need cooperation from all countries which have received this great gift of nature.”</p> <p>Zelenskyy said recent Russian missile strikes and <a href="#">an offensive</a>, thwarted by Ukrainian forces in the country’s eastern Donbas region, were on ecologically important waterways. He said Russian President Vladimir Putin and his forces care little for the environment and are deliberately targeting the water security of Central and Eastern Europe with its continued war.</p> <p>“The threats to the entire humanity is just impossible to be organized in a comprehensive way without being cognizant of what is taking place on water,” he said, referring to the war.</p>



From the beginning of the Kremlin's invasion, Russian forces have shown little regard for the effects of its war on the environment. Part of its earliest attacks included taking a position in Chernobyl (and bombing it), the site of the worst nuclear disaster in history, which [kicked up nuclear dust](#). The problem has not been lost on the Ukrainian government, which is, along with cataloguing alleged genocide and crimes against humanity, [devoting investigations into the Russian crimes on the environment](#) and the damage of bombings and munitions on groundwater and soil.

This year's conference is focusing on mobilizing support for Ukraine, which is a little more than a five hour car-ride to the border from Bratislava. Slovakian President Zuzana Čaputová, who spoke before Zelenskyy, affirmed her country's support for Ukraine and the grave threat still facing her nation and Europe writ-large.

"The Russian regime is waging a war on our democratic values, and the rules that have secured peace on our continent for decades," she said. "And that is the true nature of the challenge we are facing today."

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HEADLINE	<b>06/02 Ukraine fights economic crisis</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jun/02/ukraine-raises-interest-rates-to-25-in-first-increase-since-russian-invasion">https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jun/02/ukraine-raises-interest-rates-to-25-in-first-increase-since-russian-invasion</a>
GIST	<p>Ukraine more than doubled interest rates to 25% on Thursday in a move to try to stem double-digit inflation and protect its currency, which has collapsed since Russia's invasion.</p> <p>In the first interest rates intervention since Vladimir Putin's troops attacked on 24 February, the Ukrainian central bank's governor, Kyrylo Shevchenko, increased the benchmark interest rate from 10% to 25%.</p> <p>It takes borrowing costs to their highest level since September 2015 – when Ukraine's economy was reeling from Russia's annexation of Crimea – and the highest in Europe.</p> <p>The Russian invasion has devastated Ukraine's economy, which the World Bank has forecast could shrink by at least a third this year. The war has forced businesses to close, destroyed infrastructure, blocked shipping routes and reduced whole towns to rubble.</p> <p>Shevchenko called for talks with the International Monetary Fund on a new aid programme. The increase was criticised by an adviser to President Volodymyr Zelenskiy's office, who said the rate was too high and dangerous to the economy during wartime. It was not clear whether he was speaking in a personal capacity.</p> <p>The National Bank of Ukraine had frozen its main rate 10% at the start of the invasion, but last week signalled it could resume regular monetary policy reviews as business activity partially recovered in safer parts of the country.</p> <p>It is betting that a sharp rate rise will also nudge the government to lift the yield on domestic bonds, making assets held in its currency, the hryvnia, more attractive and preventing household incomes and savings from being eroded by inflation.</p> <p>Inflation was already in double digits before the conflict began and climbed further to about 17% in May from 16.4% in April, according to central bank estimates.</p> <p>It said inflation could double in 2022 from 10% in 2021, pushed up by rising global prices and the damage of the war on domestic production and supply chains.</p> <p>The number of small businesses that had suspended operations in April fell to 26% from 73% in March, according to a survey by the European Business Association, the union of businesses operating in Ukraine.</p>
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HEADLINE	06/03 Day 100 of the Russia invasion
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jun/03/russia-ukraine-war-what-we-know-on-day-100-of-the-invasion">https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jun/03/russia-ukraine-war-what-we-know-on-day-100-of-the-invasion</a>
GIST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Russian forces currently occupy about 20% of Ukraine's territory</b>, Volodymyr Zelenskiy said in a video address to the Luxembourg parliament. The <a href="#">frontlines of battle stretch across more than 1,000km (620 miles)</a>, the Ukrainian president said, adding that 100 Ukrainians were dying daily in eastern Ukraine, and another 450-500 people were wounded.</li> <li>• <b>Ukraine has had "some success" in the battles in Sievierodonetsk</b> but it is too early to tell, according to Zelenskiy. "The situation there is the hardest now, just as in the cities and communities nearby – Lysychansk, Bakhmut and others. Many cities are facing a powerful Russian attack," he said in his latest national <a href="#">address</a>.</li> <li>• <b>About 60% of the infrastructure and residential buildings in Lysychansk</b>, one of only two cities in the east still under at least partial Ukrainian control, <b>have been destroyed from attacks</b>, according to a local official. Oleksandr Zaika, head of the Lysychansk City military-civil administration, said 20,000 people were left in the city, down from a pre-war population of 97,000.</li> <li>• <b>About 800 people, including children, are hiding underneath the Azot chemical factory in Sievierodonetsk</b>, according to Serhiy Haidai, the governor of Luhansk region. The UK's ministry of defence <a href="#">said Russia had taken control of most of Sievierodonetsk</a>, a key eastern Ukrainian city that has come under intense Russian shelling.</li> <li>• <b>Civilians are being urged to flee the eastern Ukrainian city of Sloviansk as Russia bombing intensifies</b>. With no water or electricity, 100 people heeded the mayor's call on Thursday to evacuate.</li> <li>• <b>Pro-Russian officials in the occupied Zaporizhzhia region of Ukraine said a decree had been issued to "nationalise" state assets</b> in the south-eastern region. The deputy head of the Moscow-imposed administration, Andrei Trofimov, said the nationalisation <a href="#">would affect land, natural resources, and facilities in strategic sectors of the economy</a>, as well as property owned by Ukraine as of 24 February.</li> <li>• <b>Ukraine more than doubled interest rates to 25%</b> on Thursday in a move to try to stem double-digit inflation and protect its currency, which has collapsed since Russia's invasion. In the first interest rates intervention since president Vladimir Putin's troops attacked on 24 February, the Ukrainian central bank's governor, <a href="#">Kyrylo Shevchenko, increased the benchmark interest rate from 10% to 25%</a>.</li> <li>• <b>Nato's secretary general, Jens Stoltenberg, said the alliance was in touch with Turkey to find a "united way" forward to address Ankara's concerns over Sweden and Finland's bid to join</b>. <a href="#">Stoltenberg's latest remarks come</a> after he told reporters yesterday that he would convene senior officials from Finland, Sweden and Turkey in Brussels in the coming days to discuss the issue.</li> <li>• <b>The White House announced a fresh round of sanctions</b> over Russia's invasion of Ukraine, targeting Russian government officials and elites as well as several yachts linked to Putin. <a href="#">The sanctions</a> were announced as Ukraine's foreign minister, <a href="#">Dmytro Kuleba, said he was "grateful" to the US and its secretary of state, Antony Blinken</a>, for a new \$700m weapons package for Ukraine.</li> <li>• <b>EU ambassadors dropped the leader of Russia's Orthodox church, Patriarch Kirill, from a proposed blacklist</b>, according to diplomats. <a href="#">The removal of Patriarch Kirill from the list of sanctioned individuals</a> allows the EU to agree on a new round of sanctions after opposition from Hungary.</li> <li>• <b>Russia has accused the son of a Conservative MP of involvement in the killing of a Chechen brigade commander in Ukraine</b>. Russia's national guard said one of its commanders, the Chechen fighter Adam Bisultanov, was killed on 26 May in a clash with <a href="#">a "group of mercenaries from the UK and the USA" that included the "son of a British parliamentarian", Ben Grant</a>.</li> <li>• <b>European Commission president Ursula von der Leyen has said it is in the EU's strategic interest but also "our moral duty" to make it possible for Ukraine to join the 30-nation bloc</b>. Zelenskiy said in his latest national address: "In a few weeks, we are waiting for the answer of the European Union on the issue of candidate status for Ukraine. We are very much looking forward to it."</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>UN aid chief Martin Griffiths is in Moscow on Friday to <a href="#">discuss</a> clearing the way for exports of grain and other food from Ukraine’s Black Sea ports.</b> Since the invasion, Ukrainian grain shipments from its Black Sea ports have stalled and more than 20m tonnes of grain are stuck in silos, while Moscow says the chilling effect of western sanctions imposed on Russia has hurt its fertiliser and grain exports.</li> <li>• <b>Ten Russian servicemen who looted the property of Bucha residents have been <a href="#">identified</a> and reported on suspicion of violating the laws and customs of war.</b> “Pre-trial investigation in criminal proceedings is carried out by investigators of ... the national police of Ukraine,” Ukraine’s prosecutor general said in a statement on Thursday.</li> </ul>
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HEADLINE	<b>06/02 Interpol: arms to Ukraine end up criminals</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jun/02/ukraine-weapons-end-up-criminal-hands-says-interpol-chief-jurgen-stock">https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jun/02/ukraine-weapons-end-up-criminal-hands-says-interpol-chief-jurgen-stock</a>
GIST	<p>Weapons sent to Ukraine after Russia’s invasion in February will end up in the global hidden economy and in the hands of criminals, the head of <a href="#">Interpol</a> has said.</p> <p>Jürgen Stock says once the conflict ends, a wave of guns and heavy arms will flood the international market and he urged Interpol’s member states, especially those supplying weapons, to cooperate on arms tracing.</p> <p>“Once the guns fall silent [in Ukraine], the illegal weapons will come. We know this from many other theatres of conflict. The criminals are even now, as we speak, focusing on them,” Stock said.</p> <p>“Criminal groups try to exploit these chaotic situations and the availability of weapons, even those used by the military and including heavy weapons. These will be available on the criminal market and will create a challenge. No country or region can deal with it in isolation because these groups operate at a global level.”</p> <p>He added: “We can expect an influx of weapons in <a href="#">Europe</a> and beyond. We should be alarmed and we have to expect these weapons to be trafficked not only to neighbouring countries but to other continents.”</p> <p>He said Interpol urged members to use its database to help “track and trace” the weapons. “We are in contact with member countries to encourage them to use these tools. Criminals are interested in all kinds of weapons ... basically any weapons that can be carried might be used for criminal purposes.”</p> <p>Ukraine’s western allies have sent shipments of high-end military weapons to Ukraine since the Russian invasion more than three months ago. On Tuesday, the American president, Joe Biden, announced the US would supply Kyiv with advanced missile systems and munitions. After the US pulled out of Afghanistan in 2021, following 20 years of war, huge amounts of often highly sophisticated military equipment was left behind and fell into the hands of the Taliban.</p> <p>Stock, the secretary general of the international policing organisation who was speaking to the Anglo-American Press Association in Paris, said the conflict in Ukraine had also led to a rise in large-scale fertiliser theft and an increase in counterfeit agrochemicals. There was also a huge rise in fuel theft. “These products have become more valuable,” he said.</p> <p>Asked about alleged sanctions-busting and money laundering by Russian oligarchs faced with international restrictions, he said Interpol was investigating neither these nor alleged war crimes as Interpol’s constitution forbade the organisation to get involved in political activity and had to remain neutral.</p> <p>However, he added the organisation had received a request from Ukraine to help with the identification of those killed in the conflict. “We are not in Ukraine but we could help with this. It is classical identification work,” said Stock.</p>

	Other requests would be considered by Interpol on a “case by case” basis, taking into consideration Interpol’s “strict neutrality”, he added. “Our channels of communication remain open [to member countries] for an exchange of war crimes information. But we are not looking at war crimes; Interpol has no investigating powers.”
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HEADLINE	<b>06/03 Shanghai ‘revenge spending’, exodus</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jun/03/apocalypse-mentality-revenge-spending-and-an-exodus-in-newly-free-shanghai">https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jun/03/apocalypse-mentality-revenge-spending-and-an-exodus-in-newly-free-shanghai</a>
GIST	<p>For 26-year-old Daphne, the last two months felt like “a fever dream”. The Taiwanese marketing specialist has lived in Shanghai for years, but had never experienced anything like this. Alongside an estimated 25 million neighbours, she has spent the past 76 days almost entirely inside her apartment in the name of China’s zero-Covid policy.</p> <p>On Wednesday, most of them were finally free. “Just like the lockdown in the beginning, the unlocking also came suddenly,” she says. “Everyone has a feeling of ecstasy and disbelief, and many communities were setting off firecrackers and fireworks.”</p> <p>Underpinning it all was the anxiety that it could reverse at any moment. Authorities had warned the reopening was conditional, and within a day some streets had reportedly been fenced in again after a positive case walked through the neighbourhood.</p> <p>“This unpredictability hasn’t stopped everyone from enjoying life, and because of this apocalypse mentality, every day feels like the last day,” says Daphne.</p> <p>Across Shanghai people revelled in their newfound freedom, for however long it lasted. Some made beelines for their favourite food outlets and luxury retailers in what’s been dubbed “revenge spending”. Hongqiao railway station was packed with people eager to leave after getting trapped in the city by the snap lockdown. Others milled around, just enjoying the simple pleasure of being outside.</p> <p>“At 0:00am on 1 June Shanghai ended the lockdown. We screamed while driving on the road, and we went to have a kebab, get a drink, and see the Huangpu river,” wrote one social media user who filmed his friends’ expedition through the town.</p> <p>There have been roadbumps. A viral video showed previously trapped visitors to Shanghai stopping at highway checkpoints, finally able to go home, only to have fearful tollbooth operators slam windows shut when hearing where they came from.</p> <p>On Friday, reports emerged of long and frustrating queues at PCR testing stations. Shanghai is among a number of cities to establish routine testing of residents, requiring they get negative results every 72 hours to maintain their “green” health code which allows freedom of movement.</p> <p>Restaurants are still closed for in-house dining. The toll of the lockdown on small and medium businesses is not yet clear, but topline statistics show retail sales and production figures plummeted by 40-65% during the two-month shutdown.</p> <p>Eyes now are on other major cities, like Beijing, which avoided completely shutting down by enacting community-level lockdowns, public transport shutdowns, and district-wide work from home orders, which curbed people’s movement. Statements and speeches from officials, including China’s president, Xi Jinping, have made it clear the government is locked on to its zero-Covid policy, despite the increased transmissibility of the Omicron variant and sub-variants, and senior world health officials saying it is not sustainable.</p>

	<p>The ruling Communist party's People's Daily newspaper published a commentary on Thursday in which it said the zero-Covid policy was most appropriate for China's situation.</p> <p>"Great, phased results have been achieved in the defence of Shanghai," it said.</p> <p>There had been some silver linings, as the punishing restrictions and chaotic administration of rules and delivery disruptions fostered solidarity. One Shanghai student, Zuxia, said the time allowed him and his parents to foster the best relationship they'd had since he was a teenager. "But, when Shanghai finally ended its lockdown, I was still very happy to see friends offline!"</p> <p>Many residents, especially among expats, left during the lockdown if they were able. Others, like Daphne, are now intent on moving away. She says the last two months made everyone "cherish the little things in life more".</p> <p>"I've seen a lot of neighbourhoods getting closer together [during the lockdown], like my parents' generation living in the village when they were kids. That experience was nice, but it's the only good thing about it."</p>
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HEADLINE	<b>06/02 NKorea helms world disarmament body</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jun/03/outrage-as-north-korea-takes-helm-of-world-disarmament-body">https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jun/03/outrage-as-north-korea-takes-helm-of-world-disarmament-body</a>
GIST	<p>North Korea skipped the diplomatic niceties for a combative tone as it took the helm of the Conference on Disarmament.</p> <p>"My country is still at war with the United States," declared Pyongyang's ambassador, Han Tae-Song.</p> <p>Around 50 countries have voiced their outrage that the nuclear-armed North Korea is being tasked with chairing the world's most foremost multilateral disarmament forum for the next three weeks.</p> <p>North Korea took over the rotating presidency of the Geneva-based Conference on Disarmament on Thursday, according to a decades-old practice among the body's 65 members following the alphabetical order of country names in English.</p> <p>But despite the automatic nature of North Korea's presidency of the conference, dozens of non-governmental organisations had urged countries to walk out of the room in protest.</p> <p>There was no dramatic exit, but many nations opted to send only lower-level diplomats, while the US, the EU, Britain, Australia and South Korea, among others, took the occasion to chastise Pyongyang over its numerous ballistic missile tests and feared preparation for a fresh nuclear test, the first since 2017.</p> <p>"We remain gravely concerned about the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's reckless actions which continue to seriously undermine the very value of the Disarmament Conference," said the Australian ambassador, Amanda Gorely, speaking on behalf of the group of countries.</p> <p>The decision to remain in the room should not in any way be interpreted as "tacit consent" of North Korea's violations of international law, she said.</p> <p>Pyongyang's ambassador, who opened Thursday's meeting, held exceptionally in the UN's distinctive human rights chamber in Geneva, merely responded: "The president takes note of your statement."</p> <p>In Washington, State Department spokesman Ned Price said that North Korea's role called the body's utility into doubt.</p>

“It certainly does call that into question when you have a regime like the DPRK in a senior leadership post, a regime that has done as much as any other government around the world to erode the non-proliferation norm,” he said.

North Korea, one of the most militarised countries in the world, has carried out a number of missile tests since the beginning of the year.

The US and South Korea say it fired three missiles, including possibly its largest intercontinental ballistic missile, hours after Joe Biden closed a visit to the region late last month.

The US and others have warned that Pyongyang is preparing its first nuclear test in five years.

In Thursday’s joint statement, Gorely urged North Korea to “observe a moratorium on nuclear test explosions”.

After repeatedly “taking note” as president of the criticism, Han, the North Korean ambassador, took the floor in his national capacity to insist on North Korea’s right to defend itself against US “threats”.

Pyongyang, he pointed out, remained officially at war with the US since the 1953 ceasefire that ended combat and split the Korean peninsula.

“No country has the right to criticise or interfere in the national defence policy” of North Korea, he said.

The Conference on Disarmament, which is not a UN body but meets at its headquarters in Geneva, is a multilateral disarmament forum that holds three sessions a year.

It negotiates arms control and disarmament accords and focuses on the cessation of the nuclear arms race.

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HEADLINE	<b>06/02 Injured BLM protester files lawsuit on SPD</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/law-justice/woman-struck-in-eye-with-rubber-bullet-during-seattle-blm-protests-files-federal-civil-rights-lawsuit/">https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/law-justice/woman-struck-in-eye-with-rubber-bullet-during-seattle-blm-protests-files-federal-civil-rights-lawsuit/</a>
GIST	<p>A woman who was struck in the eye with a so-called “rubber sbullet” during the 2020 Black Lives Matter protests, causing an injury that required surgery, has filed a federal civil rights lawsuit against the Seattle Police Department.</p> <p>Nikita Tarver alleges an unknown officer targeted her — the only Black person in a crowd of white protesters — when she raised a sign showing the names and identities of police violence victims.</p> <p>Tarver was likely struck with a 40-mm foam-tipped projectile, <a href="#">one of several less-lethal weapons a federal judge later enjoined police from using against nonviolent protesters</a>, finding officers were likely violating the civil rights of thousands of people who swarmed into the streets to protest police violence in the wake of the May 25, 2020, murder of George Floyd by Minneapolis police.</p> <p>Such foam-tipped rounds can cause serious injury, and their manufacturer warns against firing them at people’s heads.</p> <p>The lawsuit — which also contains allegations of assault, negligence and outrage — joins dozens of others filed by protesters who claim police used unnecessary and excessive force against nonviolent demonstrators during large protests during the summer of 2020.</p> <p>The Seattle city attorney’s office did not immediately respond to requests for comment.</p>



	<p>Tarver describes herself as a social justice advocate who had never participated in a protest before being compelled to join thousands of demonstrators who massed in downtown Seattle on May 30, 2020, to decry Floyd's murder.</p> <p>The lawsuit claims that Tarver and a friend were walking back to their car after listening to several speakers when Tarver hoisted a sign depicting the names and identities of other victims of police violence.</p> <p>"Within seconds of holding her sign up so that it could be seen, Nikita felt a blast in her left eye," the lawsuit says. "Nikita screamed out in terror. Her entire face felt like it was burning and she felt like she was going to lose her eye."</p> <p>Tarver, the lawsuit says, "had never experienced this level of pain in her life."</p> <p>Tarver's friend drove her to Harborview Medical Center, where she was treated for an eye injury that needed surgery and may require additional operations, according to the lawsuit.</p> <p>The injury has required numerous medical appointments and required Tarver to wear an eyepatch.</p> <p>"Nikita continues to experience significant physical pain as a result of this incident," the lawsuit says. "She often feels like there are shards of glass in her eye."</p> <p>The lawsuit, filed by Seattle attorney James Bible, states that Tarver thinks she was targeted because she's Black: "Nikita was the only African American person among several white people that were near her at the time she was shot in the face."</p>
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HEADLINE	<b>06/02 Now Türkiye, not Turkey, at the UN</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/02/world/europe/turkiye-turkey-united-nations.html">https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/02/world/europe/turkiye-turkey-united-nations.html</a>
GIST	<p>Turkey has changed its name at the United Nations, in the biggest push yet by President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's government to get the rest of the world to call the country by its Turkish language name, Türkiye (tur-KEE-yeh).</p> <p>The name isn't new to the Turkish people, who have used it since their country was established in 1923 after the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire.</p> <p>But equally common in the country has been the Anglicized version of the name, which, for some, brings the negative connotations associated with the English language word.</p> <p>The change at the United Nations was set in motion last winter by Mr. Erdogan, whose popularity has sagged since he was re-elected in 2018 and comes as his constituents grapple with <a href="#">soaring food prices and the plummeting value of the Turkish lira</a>.</p> <p>"It is an attempt also to show to the Turkish public at home and to Turks living in Germany and other Western European countries that Erdogan has the power to assert his will beyond the political boundaries of the country," said Mustafa Aksakal, a professor of history at Georgetown University in Washington. "The name change may seem silly to some but it puts Erdogan in the role of protector, of safeguarding international respect for the country."</p> <p>Over the past two decades, Mr. Erdogan has pitched to voters visions of past Ottoman grandeur as he tried to widen his country's influence with increased trade and military deployments. But he hasn't been able to keep economic problems at bay, and ahead of elections, due before June 2023, his opposition has <a href="#">shown signs of strength</a>.</p>

Next year is also the 100th anniversary of the Turkish Republic, for which Mr. Erdogan has long planned celebrations. [Mr. Erdogan's vision of the country](#), appealing to conservative Muslims, is much different than the secular republic founded by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk.

At the United Nations, the change was requested in a letter from Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu of Turkey that was received on Wednesday and took effect immediately, according to a spokesman for the U.N. The new official name of the country in English is the Republic of Türkiye. Historians trace the first written mention of Türkiye to the eighth century in present-day Mongolia, Mr. Aksakal said.

Mr. Erdogan's dislike of the Anglicized name was [on display in December 2019](#), when he unveiled prototypes of a locally made electric car. He signaled that products should say they were "Made in Türkiye," not "Made in Turkey."

He advocated for the phrase more forcefully two years later, [issuing a memorandum](#) saying that Türkiye best represents Turkish culture and history, and that it should be used as the country's name in all languages.

Following the memorandum, many public institutions within the country started using Türkiye. Some foreign counterparts also started using the Turkish word, according to a Turkish official.

A "Hello! Türkiye" international ad campaign was part of the push. The state broadcaster's English language outlet, TRT World, published an article backing the move, saying when [Persia changed its name to Iran](#), "It reflected a will for the country to take charge of its destiny." The article also lamented the fact that in English, the country shared a name with the bird native to the Americas.

When the turkey started making its way to other parts of the world in the 16th century, people tried to associate it with known places, Mr. Aksakal said. For instance, he said, it is known as the Indian bird in both French and Turkish.

The TRT article had another complaint: The other meaning of the English word. "Flip through the Cambridge Dictionary and 'turkey' is [defined](#) as 'something that [fails badly](#)' or 'a [stupid](#) or [silly person](#),'" it said.

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HEADLINE	<b>06/01 Israel moves blood bank underground</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/01/world/middleeast/israel-blood-underground.html">https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/01/world/middleeast/israel-blood-underground.html</a>
GIST	<p>RAMLA, Israel — When the sirens warning of incoming rockets split the skies, Israel's national blood bank moves into high alert to keep the nation's blood supply safe. The heavy machinery for blood processing, plasma freezers and centrifuges are transferred to a basement bomb shelter, a cumbersome operation that takes 10 to 12 hours.</p> <p>That is about to change.</p> <p>By the end of the year, the blood bank will be relocated to a bright, state-of-the-art subterranean facility built to withstand chemical, biological and conventional weapons, including a direct hit from a large missile, as well as earthquakes and cyberattacks.</p> <p>With war in Europe <a href="#">underscoring the vulnerability of hospitals</a> and other essential facilities, the new, nearly completed, \$135 million facility is being described by officials as the world's most protected known blood bank.</p> <p>"It will save the lives of our loved ones, our frontline workers and our soldiers in times of routine emergencies and conflict," Benny Gantz, Israel's defense minister, said at the building's dedication ceremony, "and it will serve as a model to the world."</p>

Since the late 1980s, the central blood bank has been housed in a stately but increasingly impractical facility on the campus of the Sheba Medical Center in a Tel Aviv suburb. Its glass walls and panoramic windows flood the building with light.

But in recent years, as the Tel Aviv area has increasingly become a [target of rocket attacks](#), the building has been judged unsafe.

“We had 2006, 2008, 2014, etc., etc.,” said Prof. Eilat Shinar, the blood services director for Magen David Adom, the Israeli emergency service responsible for the national blood reserves, ticking off a decade and a half of conflicts in Lebanon and Gaza.

During Israel’s deadly conflict with militant groups in Gaza in 2014, scores of technicians were cloistered in the cramped, underground quarters for 52 days to ensure a steady blood supply for both the country’s civilian hospitals and its military.

In addition, Israel sits on two seismic faults that in the event of a major earthquake would leave only the lobby of the existing center intact.

The new facility — the Marcus National Blood Services Center, named for the American philanthropists Bernard Marcus, the co-founder of Home Depot, and his wife, Billi, who donated \$35 million to the project — is in Ramla, a central city at the juncture of several of the country’s main highways, close to Ben-Gurion International Airport and the headquarters of the military’s Home Front command.

The operation will move in phases from the old facility to the new one in the coming months. The new center has three floors above ground and three below, with the processing lab, engine rooms, electrical generators and the blood vault all underground.

The vault, 50 feet down, is cocooned in concrete and steel, and has a separate air supply and filtering system. Moshe Noyovich, the engineer overseeing the project, said the inventory of blood components stored in the vault should suffice for four or five days of war.

The main generator room sits behind another set of massive blast doors, one of about 80 blast doors in the new building, some with airlocks and safety chambers between them.

Israel’s population has grown since the late 1980s from about 4.3 million to over 9 million. The new facility will be able to process double the amount of blood, a capacity that is expected to suffice for at least the next 30 years.

The building’s planners are counting on the facility’s tons of concrete and reinforced steel to protect the nation’s blood supply in the event of war. But for good measure, they also attached a small, plastic-cased mezuzah to the door post leading to the vault.

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HEADLINE	<b>06/02 WHO: steep fall Africa Covid deaths 2022</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/06/02/world/covid-19-mandates-vaccine-cases?name=style-coronavirus&amp;region=hub&amp;block=storyline_live_updates_block_recirc&amp;action=click&amp;pgtype=LegacyCollection#who-africa-covid-deaths">https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/06/02/world/covid-19-mandates-vaccine-cases?name=style-coronavirus&amp;region=hub&amp;block=storyline_live_updates_block_recirc&amp;action=click&amp;pgtype=LegacyCollection#who-africa-covid-deaths</a>
GIST	<p>The World Health Organization expects the number of Covid-19 deaths in its Africa region to fall sharply this year, compared with 2021, the agency said on Thursday. The prediction was a hopeful one <a href="#">for the world’s least vaccinated continent</a>, though it reflected a vast undercounting of past coronavirus infections <a href="#">and deaths in official tallies</a>.</p> <p><a href="#">W.H.O. scientists reported</a> that the agency’s statistical modeling forecast about 23,000 Covid deaths in 2022 in the 47-nation region, which includes most of the African continent. That would be a decline of more than 90 percent from the roughly 350,000 deaths the organization now estimates occurred in 2021.</p>

“We are turning the tide on last year’s catastrophically high Covid-19 death toll in the African region,” Dr. Matshidiso Moeti, the W.H.O.’s regional director, said at a news conference Thursday.

One important factor contributing to the expected decline, Dr. Moeti said, was that vastly more people in Africa have had past coronavirus infections than the official case counts would indicate — and therefore, many more people have some level of immunity that could protect them from severe illness or death, if not from being infected to begin with. The issue of why official death rates in Africa [are so low has been a mystery](#), with experts theorizing a variety of reasons could be playing a role, including the continent’s young demographics, hot weather and low population density in many areas.

Since the pandemic began, the region has reported a total of 11.9 million confirmed infections and more than 253,000 deaths from the virus, according to the W.H.O. But the W.H.O. study, published in The Lancet Global Health, found that there were probably 70 times that many cases that were never confirmed by testing.

For that reason, a bit more than half of the region’s population of 1.1 billion people probably acquired some level of immunity by the start of 2022, though only about 14 percent had been fully vaccinated. (The vaccination rate has since risen to 18 percent.)

[A study](#) by South African researchers, published last week but not yet peer-reviewed, found that [as many as 98 percent](#) of people in that country had antibodies from either a past infection or vaccination or both. Even so, many still [became infected in the nation’s latest virus wave](#), which began in April and was driven by [BA.4 and BA.5, new subvariants](#) of Omicron. New deaths remained far lower, though, than previous waves’ peaks.

To prevent more deaths in the region, Dr. Moeti said, it will be crucial to vaccinate more people who are 65 or older or who have medical conditions that make them especially vulnerable. Vaccine hesitancy, the easing of pandemic restrictions and a variety of logistical problems have hampered vaccination efforts in many countries.

“While the advances in reducing death rates is a huge achievement, and testament to the unwavering efforts of countries and partners, that number is still unacceptably high,” she said.

The W.H.O. study found that death rates from the virus last year were twice as high in the region’s high-income and upper-middle-income nations, particularly those in southern Africa, as they were elsewhere. Dr. Moeti attributed that to higher rates of comorbidities in the more affluent countries, including diabetes, H.I.V., obesity and hypertension.

Noting that new virus variants are continuing to emerge, Dr. Moeti said the organization expected more than 166 million new infections in the region this year.

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HEADLINE	<b>06/02 NATO: must aid Ukraine in ‘war of attrition’</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2022/jun/2/west-must-aid-ukraine-war-attrition-russia-nato-ch/">https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2022/jun/2/west-must-aid-ukraine-war-attrition-russia-nato-ch/</a>
GIST	<p>The fight in Ukraine has become “a war of attrition” and Western aid for Kyiv against Russia is more vital than ever, NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg said Thursday, offering a grim assessment of the bloody conflict as it nears the 100-day mark but also expressing deep solidarity with the embattled government in Kyiv.</p> <p>Speaking to reporters at the White House after meeting with President Biden, the NATO chief outlined a broad strategy for the transatlantic military alliance for the weeks and months to come. It’s focused primarily on ramping up arms shipments and other assistance to Ukraine to help repel Russia’s major offensive in the eastern Donbas region and prevent Russian forces from capturing more territory.</p>

The president and NATO chief also previewed a major NATO summit set for the end of this month in Madrid, expected to formally invite Sweden and Finland to join the 30-nation alliance if current NATO member Turkey lifts its objections.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy estimated Thursday that enemy troops now control about 20% of his country, which is approximately the size of Texas — underscoring the urgent situation facing the government in Kyiv.

Despite its early setbacks and embarrassing missteps on the battlefield, Russia appears to be making incremental but steady progress on the eastern front, having taken nearly total control of the key cities of Mariupol and Sievierodonetsk. Stopping Russia's advancement is crucial and would give Kyiv valuable leverage at the negotiating table, which is where the conflict ultimately will find its end, Mr. Stoltenberg said.

"Wars are by nature unpredictable and therefore we just have to be prepared for the long haul," he said. "Because what we see is that this war has now become a war of attrition, where the Ukrainians are paying a high price for defending their own country on the battlefield, but also we see that Russia is taking high casualties."

"Our responsibility is to provide support to Ukraine," Mr. Stoltenberg said. "Most wars ... will at some stage end at the negotiating table. But what we know is that what happens around the negotiating table is very closely linked to the situation on the ground, on the battlefield."

Mr. Stoltenberg's comments came just hours after Britain announced it would send a new shipment of medium-range M270 rocket launchers to Ukraine, the latest in a series of NATO weapons deliveries that have helped Ukrainian troops slow and in some cases roll back Russian advances.

Britain's announcement came one day after the White House unveiled a new \$700 million aid package to Ukraine. The U.S. package includes the light, agile M142 High Mobility Artillery Rocket System; four Mi-17 helicopters; seven counter-artillery and air surveillance radar systems; 15,000 155mm artillery rounds; 6,000 anti-armor weapons; and 15 tactical vehicles, Pentagon officials said.

The Biden administration also announced Thursday yet another round of sanctions on Russian individuals and entities, including Sergei Roldugin, a close associate of Mr. Putin, seven Russian luxury vessels and three aircraft. Other NATO members also have announced their own aid packages in recent days.

But that assistance is deepening an already historic rift between Moscow and the West. Kremlin officials on Thursday warned the U.S. and its allies of "absolutely undesirable and rather unpleasant scenarios" if Ukrainian troops use foreign weapons to strike the Russian homeland.

"This pumping of Ukraine with weapons ... will bring more suffering to Ukraine, which is merely a tool in the hands of those countries that supply it with weapons," said Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov.

On the ground, Western intelligence officials say that Russia has made some gains in the Donbas but has paid a steep toll.

Russia "continues to make steady local gains, enabled by a heavy concentration of artillery," the U.K. Ministry of Defense said in a Twitter post. "This has not been without cost, and Russian forces have sustained losses in the process."

The ministry said Russia now faces the risky proposition of crossing the Siverskyy Donetsk River as it focuses on the Donetsk region, where Ukrainian armed forces have set up defensive positions and destroyed bridges.

Against that backdrop, Mr. Zelenskyy on Thursday used a video address to a European security conference to plead for more weapons and for the West to implement even harsher economic sanctions on Moscow.

“As of today, the occupiers control almost 20% of our territory,” he said.

That figure could soon rise if Russian advances in the Luhansk and Donetsk provinces — which collectively make up the Donbas region — continue at their current pace. But Ukrainian troops are mounting a fierce defense, and military analysts generally agree that the conflict is now approaching a new “frozen” state with limited gains by either side.

That new reality has led international leaders such as Mr. Stoltenberg to stress that cease-fire negotiations are likely the only feasible path out of war. The Kremlin, however, has signaled it would take a hard line in such talks. Absent a clear defeat on the battlefield, Russia almost certainly would insist on claiming control of the Donbas and retaining control of Crimea, which it forcibly annexed in 2014.

Ukrainian leaders have all but ruled out permanently relinquishing their claim to all of the territories now in Russian hands.

Ukrainian first lady Olena Zelenska said Thursday that conceding territory likely wouldn’t stop Russian aggression.

Ms. Zelenska, speaking to ABC’s “Good Morning America” in her first solo television interview, said giving up land is “like conceding a freedom.”

“Even if we would consider territories, the aggressor would not stop at that,” she said. “He would continue pressing, he would continue launching more and more steps forward, more and more attacks against our territory.”

Ms. Zelenska said support from the U.S. and other countries is “really important, because you feel you’re not alone.”

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HEADLINE	<b>06/02 Sievierodonetsk: 800 hiding beneath factory</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jun/02/ukraine-russia-war-children-hiding-sieverodonetsk-factory">https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jun/02/ukraine-russia-war-children-hiding-sieverodonetsk-factory</a>
GIST	<p>About 800 people, including children, are hiding beneath a chemical factory in the key eastern Ukrainian city of Sievierodonetsk, now 80% held by Russian troops, as more western allies promise additional missile systems and arms to Kyiv.</p> <p>Serhiy Gaidai, the governor of Luhansk, said on Thursday that bitter street fighting continued in the city, where Ukrainian forces have pledged to fight “to the end”.</p> <p>As Russia’s war on <a href="#">Ukraine</a> neared its 100th day, he said 800 people were hiding in Soviet-era bomb shelters beneath the Azot factory. “There are locals there, who were asked to leave the city but refused,” he said. “Also children, though not many.”</p> <p>The British defence ministry said that while the main road into Sievierodonetsk remained under Ukrainian control, Russia had taken most of the city and “continues to make steady local gains, enabled by a heavy concentration of artillery”.</p> <p>Ukraine’s armed forces general staff said the invading forces were “conducting assault operations inside Sievierodonetsk” and also attacking other parts in the east and north-east of the city. At least four civilians had been killed and 10 wounded there, officials said.</p>



Capturing Sievierodonetsk would give the Russian president, Vladimir Putin, control of all of Luhansk – the region that, with Donetsk, makes up Ukraine’s Donbas industrial heartland – consolidating a shift in battlefield momentum after his forces were pushed back from the capital, Kyiv, and northern Ukraine.

Russian forces now occupy about 20% of Ukrainian territory, Ukraine’s president, Volodymyr Zelenskiy, said, with the frontlines stretching across more than 620 miles (1,000km). More than 12 million Ukrainians had been displaced and more than 5 million had left the country, Zelenskiy told Luxembourg’s parliament.

“We have to defend ourselves against almost the entire Russian army. All combat-ready Russian military formations are involved in this aggression,” Zelenskiy said, adding that 100 Ukrainians were dying every day in eastern Ukraine and another 450-500 were being wounded.

The president said that in 2014 Kremlin-backed separatists and the Russian military controlled Ukrainian territory roughly equivalent in size to the Netherlands. That area had more than trebled to about 125,000 sq km, and nearly twice as much again had been “polluted” with mines and unexploded ordnance.

The fall of Sievierodonetsk would facilitate Putin’s drive into nearby Donetsk. The regional governor, Pavlo Kyrylenko, said on Thursday that Russian forces were trying to push south through Lyman and Izyum towards the key cities of Sloviansk and Kramatorsk.

As the ground war raged on, Ukraine’s foreign minister, Dmytro Kuleba, thanked the US for a new \$700m (£566m) weapons package it announced on Wednesday, including high mobility artillery rocket systems that can hit targets up to 50 miles away.

“Advanced American systems will help our brave armed forces to defend Ukrainian land from Russian invaders,” Kuleba tweeted. His Russian counterpart, Sergei Lavrov, accused the US of “pouring fuel on the fire”, but the US secretary of state, Antony Blinken, said Ukraine had promised not to use the systems to hit targets inside Russia.

Britain also said it would send sophisticated medium-range rocket systems to Ukraine in a move “closely coordinated” with the US. The defence secretary, Ben Wallace, said the UK would send an unspecified number of M270 launchers – similar to the US Himars” systems – and that Ukrainian troops would be trained in the UK to use them.

The Swedish government announced on Thursday it would provide Ukraine with more economic aid and military equipment, including anti-ship missiles, rifles and anti-tank weapons, saying it “sees a continuing need” to support Ukraine. Germany said on Wednesday it would supply anti-aircraft missiles and radar systems.

Moscow again denounced the large-scale provision of western arms to Ukraine. The Kremlin’s spokesperson, Dmitry Peskov, said the “pumping” of weapons “will bring more suffering to Ukraine, which is merely a tool in the hands of those countries that supply it with weapons”.

Peskov threatened “absolutely undesirable and rather unpleasant scenarios” if Ukrainian forces “hypothetically try to use these weapons against targets on our territory”, saying such a decision would “significantly change the situation in an unfavourable direction”.

On the diplomatic front, the US president, Joe Biden, was due to meet the Nato secretary general in Washington. Jens Stoltenberg said he would also convene a meeting soon with Swedish, Finnish and Turkish officials to discuss Turkey’s continued opposition to Sweden and Finland joining the US-led defence alliance.

The Danish foreign minister, Jeppe Kofod, said on Thursday he expected Denmark to join the EU’s common defence policy on 1 July after a referendum on Wednesday in which two-thirds of voters backed abandoning Copenhagen’s 30-year-old opt-out.

	<p>Amid mounting fears over the war's impact on world food supplies, Putin is due to meet the head of the African Union, Senegal's president, Macky Sall, on Friday to discuss "freeing up stocks of cereals and fertilisers", Sall's office said. The meeting, in the south-western Russian city of Sochi, was organised at the Kremlin's invitation, Dakar said.</p> <p>Ukraine and Russia are major suppliers of wheat and other cereals to Africa, while Russia is a key producer of fertiliser.</p>
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HEADLINE	<b>06/03 Ukraine devastation, defiance: 100 days</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jun/03/devastation-and-defiance-in-ukraine-100-days-of-a-war-that-is-reshaping-europe">https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jun/03/devastation-and-defiance-in-ukraine-100-days-of-a-war-that-is-reshaping-europe</a>
GIST	<p>It was just hours until the first missiles would land. The last day of an era in Europe. On the evening of 23 February, the world braced.</p> <p>Over Ukraine's border, thousands of Russian troops had received their orders. A president in Kyiv and another in Moscow prepared the most significant addresses of their lives. In western capitals, officials worked to ward off what now seemed inevitable: the end of three decades of peace between Europe's major powers.</p> <p>And the end of an idea. That trade and prosperity could dissolve old European rivalries. That access to iPhones, Instagram and Ikea furniture could cool the chauvinist impulses that had fuelled centuries of bloody history.</p> <p>In spite of unusually specific warnings from the US government of an imminent invasion, and the buildup of forces in Russia and Belarus, Ukrainians were not panicking. There were no queues at the western borders. The cafes and bars of Kyiv had been packed the previous Saturday evening. People continued making plans for holidays, dates, and swimming lessons for their children.</p> <p>Volodymyr Ksienich, 22, a student organiser, spent the night with friends. They talked about the war, of course. "Nobody really believed it would happen," he says.</p> <p>Many analysts concurred. The Russian forces massing on the border were too few to occupy the country, they argued. State media had done little to prepare the Russian public for war. An invasion would trigger economic penalties so ruinous to the Russian economy that no leader would dare risk it.</p> <p>All of this was true, and they were wrong.</p> <p><b>Day 1: Thursday 24 February</b>  <b>Russian invasion begins</b></p> <p>The Ukrainian president, Volodymyr Zelenskiy, goes on TV in the early hours of Thursday with dire news. Dressed in a suit, his face still boyish and uncreased, Zelenskiy informs the country that after weeks of brinkmanship, Vladimir Putin has authorised military action against Ukraine. All of Europe is on the edge of a war that could "burn everything", he says.</p> <p>At 5.30am, Russian state media begins broadcasting a presidential address. Incensed by what he characterises as the creation of an "anti-Russia" on his borders, Putin announces a "special military operation" aimed at the "demilitarisation and denazification" of Ukraine. As he is speaking and in the hours after, explosions are reported in Kyiv, Kramatorsk, Kharkiv, Odesa, Mariupol and other cities.</p> <p>Ksienich is woken sharply by his father. "Did you hear that?" he asks him. "I think it's bombs exploding. I think Russia's started the war."</p>

The family gather their belongings and head to his grandparent's country home on Kyiv's outskirts. It is on the drive, when Ksienich stops to refuel his car, that he feels himself cross a dividing line between life before the war and after.

"I got out of my car and I heard bursts a couple of hundred metres from me," he says. It is all still novel: the noise, the shaking ground, the impulse to flee and seek cover. He will grow weary of these sensations in the weeks to come, but the memory of this moment will still pierce through. "It was the first explosion I can remember."

Over the course of a chaotic day, Russian troops and military vehicles are reported to have come within 18 miles of the capital; to have swept through Chornobyl and taken workers there hostage; to have pushed into eastern towns such as Sumy; and to have rained missiles on port cities across the Black Sea. Russian hit squads are searching for the Ukrainian president and gunfire is heard near the presidential compound. There is a feeling of doom in Kyiv and around the world.

By sunset, Ksienich's family have gathered at the country house. Tomorrow they will need to decide whether to stay or go west. But first, they must survive the night. "We had a long discussion before going to bed, me and my relatives," he recalls. "The Russian army could be trying to invade the place where we were staying. So we decided that some of us will sleep, some of us will not."

Ksienich is part of the shift that sleeps first. He has a fitful spell in bed, ruminating. "You understand that something terrible is happening in your country," he says.

After four hours, he gets up and takes his place on guard duty.

## **Day 2: Friday 25 February**

### **'The president is here'**

Kyiv is being attacked from three directions. Blasts are being reported across the city. Gun battles are raging in its northern suburbs as Russian forces close in. Ukraine's defence ministry urges those who have not fled to make molotov cocktails and prepare to use them.

Mario Draghi, the Italian prime minister, tells parliament that Zelenskiy has missed a scheduled call that morning, pausing as his voice falters. The chamber fills the silence with spontaneous applause.

Europe is uniting in revulsion and solidarity, imposing new sanctions, debating whether to excise Moscow from the Swift payments system. Russia is expelled from the Eurovision song contest.

A few dozen miles from the city, Ksienich and his family decide to stay. "We decided we needed to try to protect ourselves, then to protect our family, then to protect the whole country, if it's possible," he says.

The family get to work building makeshift barricades around their neighbourhood to slow oncoming tanks or armoured vehicles. They make contact with other men in the area and form a local defence unit. Ksienich is handed a Kalashnikov rifle several decades older than he is.

Forty-eight hours ago he was a data analyst, but now he is learning to fight like an insurgent. "They told us what to do when a column is right near you," he says. "What to do when you see a tank."

In the few quiet moments, he feels a moral vertigo. "You need to switch from a life where you are trying to solve all your conflicts verbally, by talking ... But now you have ammo and a gun."

That night, during a pause in the shelling, the Ukrainian president resurfaces. He posts a 32-second video, shot on the streets of Kyiv himself.

“Good evening, everyone,” he says, dressed in fatigues and surrounded by four other officials. He cycles the camera to each face – “The leader of the party is here. The head of the presidential administration is here” – and finally settles on his own. “The president is here.”

### **Day 3: Saturday 26 February**

#### **Tens of thousands of Ukrainians rush to enlist**

Kyrylo Demchenko, a history student from Dnipro, joins the rush of young men signing contracts to enlist in the Ukrainian army. He is immediately handed a gun and sent to a highway at the edge of the capital.

Hours after he arrives, Demchenko, 20, and his unit spot Russian soldiers and open fire. He survives, but has little memory of the exchange, only fleeting images. “It is so terrible, so cruel,” he says.

“I remember the music of the war – the bomb attacks, the shooting of the guns. I remember the tracer bullets, lighting up when they fly. I remember the anti-aircraft missiles. I remember short, separate details.

“It’s like a terrible story from a previous life.”

### **Day 4: Sunday 27 February**

#### **West unites in response to invasion**

It is 3am, in a forest on the outskirts of Kyiv. Ksienich and a small unit of volunteers sit in silence, waiting for the telltale crack of a tree branch under a boot, or the rumble of a helicopter.

Russian battalions are 5 or 6 kilometres away, he says, but the mood on the ground is buoyant. “The first day many people were depressed, we didn’t know how our army would do,” he says. “After two or three days we have understood our army is very well prepared ... We are planning to get rid of all the Russian occupants and get back Crimea and the occupied territories.”

Roads to the west of the country are choked with traffic and more than 300,000 Ukrainians have already fled the country. They are virtually all women and children; martial law has been instituted and men between 18 and 60 are banned from leaving. Across the country, families, friends and lovers are being divided, some forever.

Old maxims of European security are crumbling every hour. Germany is sending anti-tank weapons and Stinger missiles to Ukraine, breaking a postwar taboo against exporting arms to conflict zones. The chancellor, Olaf Scholz announces the creation of a €100bn (£85bn) fund to boost the country’s armed forces. He calls it “Germany’s historical responsibility” to ensure that Putin “does not turn the clocks back”.

Four days in, Ukraine appears to have absorbed the initial Russian blow. Zelenskiy is still alive and in control of the government. Russian forces are uncoordinated, unable to take control of the airspace and running out of fuel and food. Hostomel airport, outside Kyiv, is the site of fierce fighting, preventing Russia from using it as a bridgehead into the capital.

In Bucha, a commuter town near Kyiv, an invading Russian column is devastated by Ukrainian artillery and retreats. But the soldiers return after a few hours, occupy local homes and dig in.

Putin’s plan appears not to have account for a decisive factor: that Ukrainian society would resist. That young, untrained people like Ksienich would take up guns, spend nights in a forest and risk death to defend their homes.

### **Day 9: Friday 4 March**

#### **Combat reaches Europe’s largest nuclear plant**

Fighting in Ukraine's east has reached the town of Zaporizhzhia, home to Europe's largest nuclear power plant. To the horror of world leaders and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), a building inside the facility is hit by Russian shells and is set ablaze.

Miraculously, the damage does not extend to the reactors, avoiding a catastrophic nuclear release, though exchanges of gunfire and artillery around the site continue. "This is unprecedented," says the IAEA's director general, Rafael Mariano Grossi. "Completely uncharted waters."

The US ambassador to the UN, Linda Thomas-Greenfield, tells the security council the world has "narrowly averted a nuclear catastrophe".

In Mariupol, another disaster is taking shape. Hundreds of civilians have already died in shelling since the beginning of the war. The city is surrounded and its mayor, Vadym Boichenko, announces remaining residents no longer have heat, running water or electricity.

#### **Day 15: Thursday 10 March**

##### **UK sanctions Abramovich, signalling end of 'Londongrad' era**

Roman Abramovich, one of the world's richest men, whose ownership of Chelsea football club has revolutionised the English Premier League, has his assets frozen and is banned from travelling to Britain.

The sanctions against the oligarch – whose ties to Putin have been the subject of warnings for years – signal what campaigners hope is the end of London's three-decade embrace of dirty Russian money.

The number of Ukrainians who have fled their country passes 2 million, in the fastest-growing refugee crisis in Europe since the second world war.

#### **Day 17: Saturday 12 March**

##### **Kyiv braces for invasion**

Russia's attempt to push its forces towards Kyiv has hit a snag. Ukrainian forces have blown up bridges and flooded plains, forcing the bulk of columns on to a few narrow roads. The result has been a predictable traffic jam. But after a few days, forces appear to be regrouping for an assault on the capital.

Kyiv is awash with anti-tank weapons, barricades and armed men. Ksienich has survived, and is stunned at the transformation of his home city, preparing for a battle "that could be compared to the battle for Kyiv in the second world war".

Ukraine is receiving equipment donated from around the world, including sniper scopes manufactured by the glass and crystals firm Swarovski. "It costs thousands of dollars," he marvels.

In a city bracing for war, there are still open cafes, barbers and other pockets of normal life. "It is even possible to eat yoghurt or ice-cream somewhere in the city," Ksienich says.

Moscow is making faster progress in Ukraine's south. The strategic port of Kherson has become the first major city to fall to Russia. About 2,000 people are estimated to have attended a protest in the city against the occupation.

Russian troops fire warning shots to disperse them, "but people are not afraid", two anonymous diarists write. "But among the crowd, men in dark clothes are wandering, with hoods, hiding their faces, recording."

#### **Day 24: Saturday 19 March**

##### **Mariupol theatre refuge struck by Russian missile**

Russia says it is “tightening the noose” in Mariupol. After relentless shelling that has destroyed more than 80% of residential buildings in the city, according to an estimate by its mayor, Russian forces have reached the centre and fighting has broken out around the Azovstal steelworks, a labyrinthine, Stalin-era facility that stretches for 10 sq km (4 sq miles), where hundreds of civilians are taking shelter.

A few days earlier, Russia bombed a theatre where an estimated 1,300 civilians were taking shelter. The Russian word “ДЕТИ” – “children” – had been marked out in large letters outside the building, in a fruitless appeal to the humanity of the attackers. An Associated Press investigation later estimates that at least 600 people were killed in the strike.

#### **Day 26: Monday 21 March**

##### **Russian campaign in chaos as global food prices soar**

Just after midnight a Russian tabloid, Komsomolskaya Pravda, publishes a report claiming 9,861 Russian troops have been killed so far and 16,153 have been wounded. The breathtaking three-week toll is approaching the number of Russian servicemen killed in Afghanistan during the Soviet Union’s decade-long failed occupation.

By the end of the day, the figures have been removed from the story (the newspaper claims it was hacked) but its scale echoes what observers are seeing on the ground. The Russian campaign is indecisive, bogged down and pursuing too many targets at once.

There is “no real centre of gravity, five to six different axes of advance”, says Michael Kofman, a specialist in the Russian armed forces. “The military is trying to stretch itself thin, they’re stuck in urban fighting around Kyiv in the north, they can’t make much press in the east around Kharkiv or Sumy.”

Even in the south, where Russia’s forces are most numerous and making the most progress, they are trying to advance in two opposite directions, towards Mariupol in the east and west towards Odesa. “Which makes no sense whatsoever,” Kofman says. “None.”

The pain of this misadventure is starting to be felt around the world. Egypt, which imports 80% of its grain from Russia and Ukraine, fixes the cost of bread in response to a surge in prices. The soaring cost of fuel compounds a severe currency crisis in Sri Lanka. The price of cooking oils, cereals and meats are on their way to the highest levels recorded by the United Nations since it started tracking in 1990.

#### **Day 36: Thursday 31 March**

##### **Russia announces ‘radical reduction’ in military activity**

Kyiv is quieter than it has been in weeks. “We don’t hear anything about [Russia] trying to capture the city any more,” Ksienich says.

Days before, Russian negotiators at peace talks in Turkey made the surprise announcement that their forces would “radically reduce military activity” around Kyiv and another embattled city, Cherniyiv. The Ukrainian government is sceptical, but shelling in the capital has eased over the past week. Streets are busier and shops are reopening.

“There are huge sales on everything because businesses aren’t sure if [their stock] in warehouses will be safe, because Russia is bombing warehouses full of food, clothes, oil,” Ksienich says.

There is a feeling of relief in the city but also a building sense of dread at the rumours starting to emerge as Russian forces pull back. “Some friends of mine [are] in Irpin, a city near Kyiv that was captured,” Ksienich says.

“Our army is there and many civilians tell scary things about how the Russians behaved there ... They were just shooting civilians, driving tanks over them.”



**Day 38: Saturday 2 April****War crimes discovered in Bucha and recently liberated towns**

At 2.33pm London time, an alert is posted on the wire of the news service Agence France-Presse. It reads: “At least 20 bodies seen in one street in town near Kyiv.”

It is accompanied by photographs and video footage documenting the streets of Bucha, a satellite city on the outskirts of the capital. They are scenes from hell: crushed neighbourhoods, bound corpses strewn in the roads and bodies hastily buried in the front yards of their homes. In a cellar, authorities find the body of a woman dressed in a fur coat and nothing else, and torn condom wrappers on the floor above.

The discoveries immediately draw comparisons to the killings at Srebrenica or the My Lai massacre. “What Putin has done in Ukraine doesn’t look far short of genocide to me,” says the UK prime minister, Boris Johnson.

Over the coming days, journalists reach further-flung villages and find similar horrors. In Trostianets, near the Russian border, there is evidence of summary executions and torture. In the village of Staryi Bykiv, 50 miles east of Kyiv, Russian soldiers killed at least nine civilians. From homes in Novyi Bykiv, a settlement just across a river, they looted items including jewellery, a scooter, computers and from one house, a novelty cushion, in an orgy of looting so widespread across areas occupied by the Russians that it appears to be a systematic part of military culture.

Obscured by the grisly discoveries is a significant deadline: Friday was the end of the one-year term of tens of thousand of Russian conscripts, who are permitted to leave the army, despite rumours the Kremlin might seek ways to keep them in its ranks and bolster the invasion force.

It sets the future shape of the war: Russia will not have the numbers to encircle and cut off Ukrainian troops in Donbas. Any future Russian gains in the east will come through grinding attrition. “They will have to fight for every square inch of territory,” Kofman says.

**Day 43: Wednesday 7 April****Rouble surges back to pre-invasion levels**

Russia’s currency, the rouble, hits 80 to the dollar, roughly its rate before it invaded Ukraine, an astounding rebound from the records lows of the early weeks of the war.

The rouble’s resilience, despite suffocating sanctions and an exodus of foreign businesses, is based on short-term financial engineering, a surge in oil and gas prices caused by the invasion – and Europe’s inability to quickly find alternative supplies.

Germany, whose economic model is built in part on cheap Russian gas, is weathering diplomatic pressure to impose an outright ban on imports, calls that have grown more urgent since the discovery of war crimes in Bucha and elsewhere.

Germans are being urged to do their part by turning down thermostats and driving less, but business leaders such as Martin Brudermüller, the chief executive of BASF, one of Germany’s biggest chemical companies, is warning against drastic cuts.

“Do we want to destroy the entire economy with our eyes open?” he asks.

**Day 54: Monday 18 April****Russia launches eastern offensive**

As Zelenskiy warns that Russia has commenced its campaign to seize all of the eastern Donbas region, at Mariupol’s sprawling Azovstal plant the few thousand remaining defenders and civilians – running out of

food, water and medicine – are given a midday deadline to surrender. Those who do are “guaranteed to keep their lives”, the Russians say. They reject it.

Kyiv has surprised the world and repelled the invaders, but success is bittersweet. So many have been killed or are still fighting, Ksienich says, while people in the capital begin to resume normal lives.

“You see a guy in a military uniform with a gun, who is ready to defend our country. And then you see a guy coming from a bar who’s drunk ... People are relaxing but I don’t think it’s right.”

Early in the war, he felt confident Ukraine would expel Russian forces from Kyiv, Crimea and Donbas. Now he is more circumspect. “I hope we at least get our borders before the invasion started,” he says.

**Day 61: Monday 25 April**  
**US appears to widen war aims**

Speaking in Poland after a surprise visit to Kyiv, Lloyd Austin, the US defence secretary, is asked if Washington’s goals in Ukraine have changed since the beginning of the war. He recites the administration’s standard line about helping Ukraine to defend its sovereignty. But this time, he adds something new and further-reaching.

“We want to see Russia weakened to the degree that it can’t do the kinds of things that it has done in invading Ukraine,” Austin says. “It has already lost a lot of military capability. And a lot of its troops, quite frankly. And we want to see them not have the capability to very quickly reproduce that capability.”

**Day 77: Wednesday 11 May**  
**Puppet rulers of Kherson float annexation**

As the fighting in the east settles into a grinding war of attrition, the puppet leadership of Kherson, captured by Russia early in the fighting, say they plan to seek annexation by Moscow, giving a hint of a possible future for other cities and towns seized by Russian forces. Across the occupied region, Russia has reportedly disappeared mayors, journalists and artists as it seeks to tighten its grip. In some areas it will soon introduce the rouble as an official currency and offer fast-tracked Russian passports to residents.

**Day 83: Tuesday 17 May**  
**Mariupol falls as Sweden and Finland apply to join Nato**

Russia has won the battle for Mariupol but is losing its war against Nato’s encroaching alliance. Hours after Ukraine’s military command announces it is no longer defending the Azovstal plant, and the remaining fighters are bussed towards an uncertain future in Russia, the prime ministers of Sweden and Finland confirm they will jointly submit applications to become members of the group. If they succeed, the length of Nato’s border with Russia will double overnight.

In a rare display of dissent in a country where criticising the war – or even referring to it as one – now attracts a prison sentence, a Russian retired colonel offers a withering assessment on state TV of an invasion that has cost thousands of lives for little territorial gain. “We are in total geopolitical isolation and the whole world is against us, even if we don’t want to admit it,” Mikhail Khodaryonok tells a dumbstruck panel show.

**Day 85: Thursday 19 May**  
**US passes \$40bn military and economic aid package**

The US and its Nato allies have walked a careful line so far, seeking to funnel weapons and aid to Ukraine without provoking Russia into widening the war beyond its borders. In recent weeks, sensing an opportunity to trap Russia in a quagmire, western powers are pushing that line further.

The Biden administration passes a massive \$40bn (£32bn) package of military and economic aid for Ukraine, and is shipping out long-range howitzers, armoured vehicles and kamikaze drones, a step up from the anti-tank missiles and small arms it sent earlier. It is now trumpeting its role training Ukrainian soldiers in how to use these weapons systems – and in providing intelligence that has helped killed a dozen Russian generals.

With fighting now largely confined to the east, more than 1 million Ukrainian refugees have returned home, the government says. More than 5 million remain abroad in the largest displacement crisis of the 21st century.

**Day 97: Tuesday 31 May**  
**Russia gaining ground in eastern war of attrition**

Russia is learning the lessons of its disastrous invasion. It has broken into Sievierodonetsk, the last major population centre in Luhansk province outside its control, by concentrating forces that earlier in the war it had spread thinly. Elsewhere in the east and south, it is digging in, fortifying its positions.

The heavy fighting in the eastern regions, where Russia can more easily supply its troops, is taking a heavy toll on Ukraine's defenders. Zelenskiy says 50 to 100 soldiers could be dying each day, in a rare estimate of combat casualties.

Whatever triumphalism existed after Russia retreated from around Kyiv has evaporated. The country's ports are being strangled by a blockade. Cities such as Kharkiv are still within reach of Russian artillery. Territory is expected to change hands back and forth over the next months as both militaries near exhaustion, pause to resupply and launch counter-offensives. It spells a war with no end in sight.

Ksienich spends his days ferrying tools and summer clothes to friends fighting in the east. In the spare hours, he works his old job in Warsaw remotely. He makes his life in a void between war and peace.

Even if the fighting ends soon, it will have changed his trajectory. He has given up his job overseas, and plans to do a degree in business. "I'm enrolling in how to run government and politics," he says. "I want to come back to Ukraine [and] help my country."

**Day 100: Friday 3 June**  
**Invasion midwives a new nation**

Demchenko, the young historian, has become the sergeant of a logistics unit stationed near Kharkiv. He and his men sleep in muddy trenches and, when they are lucky, on the floor of farmhouses. He shrugs off the danger and discomfort.

"When the missile or bullet is near to you, or a Russian artillery shot lands near to you, you understand your situation right now is not as good as it can be. I'm not with a glass of juice near the sea or in my favourite Carpathian mountains."

These difficult days are charged with a potent force, he says, a forging process he had only studied before in books.

"Our company was [merged] with people from different socio-economic groups, from different cities, and all of them are very different. They have different educations, different professions, and right now we are together.

"It's amazing to see how different people make this new social construction, how they discuss each other, how they are thinking about their future together ... This is like the birth of a new nation."

	One hundred days since the invasion, Putin's army has lost some battles and won others. But the Russian president's rash invasion has become a strategic catastrophe. Ukraine is embattled but united. It has become the very "anti-Russia" the war was supposed to extinguish.
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HEADLINE	<b>06/02 Concerns over Seattle purchase of housing</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.kiro7.com/news/local/concerns-over-housing-purchased-seattle-homeless/3FAMKMYXPFFHBKEUPVFLTHBI3I/">https://www.kiro7.com/news/local/concerns-over-housing-purchased-seattle-homeless/3FAMKMYXPFFHBKEUPVFLTHBI3I/</a>
GIST	<p>This week, Seattle Mayor Bruce Harrell announced his latest plan to tackle the city's homeless crisis. It includes a nearly \$19 million purchase of an apartment complex in Seattle's Green Lake neighborhood. The unit, Dockside Apartments, will be used to house 70 formerly homeless people. Harrell calls it "a victory step."</p> <p>When asked about community input when choosing the location, the mayor deferred to Sharon Lee with the Low Income Housing Institute. Lee says letters went out to anyone living within 500 feet of the building.</p> <p>But shortly after his announcement, members of the Green Lake community reached out to KIRO 7 to say they had no prior notice. One woman, Katrina, says she lives within that 500-foot radius and never received a letter.</p> <p>"Can we get some proof of any resident getting said letter?," said Kristina. "Shouldn't there be a period of notice when the surrounding community and literal next-door neighbors are allowed to comment and provide feedback?"</p> <p>Another woman, Katherine Bennett, says she also lives across the street from the new apartments. "I've lived here a year and a half, and I didn't get a letter."</p> <p>Low Income Housing Initiative's Josh Castle says that's not the case for most of the locals. He says he's spent the last few weeks working to contact businesses in the community.</p> <p>"In some cases it was hard to find a phone number, hard to find contact information. There's a few people I am still trying to track down," says Castle. "We sent out a 'dear neighbor' letter to the businesses and the neighbors in the area, and I also just did some outreach on my own. I called and emailed in any way that I could get a hold of people."</p> <p>There's still a few weeks before residents will move in to the new building. Castle says he plans to continue with outreach, but that overall the community response has been positive.</p> <p>"The neighborhood have just been so supportive, and offering donations, offering services, offering (to) volunteer. So we've just been grateful for the community's support," says Castle. "It warms my heart to see that there's so much support in Green Lake, in that area."</p> <p>Several people KIRO 7 spoke with say they look forward to welcoming their new neighbors, and believe this housing is a positive thing for those in need.</p> <p>One woman outside the building tells us, "I think it's good to change the demographic of this area. I think it's a positive thing."</p> <p>Another neighbor agreed, saying "I think it's a great idea. I think it's awesome."</p> <p>Castle hopes the apartment will provide stability for everyone that moves in.</p>

	“It’s going to be very high quality of living. And it’s a lot of folks that haven’t experienced that in a long time, and they deserve it. And we’re just so happy to bring this kind of a beautiful building space for them to stay and live, and to get them the case manager that they need,” says Castle.
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HEADLINE	<b>06/02 Schools brace summer school enrollment</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://komonews.com/news/local/school-districts-prepare-for-large-summer-school-enrollment">https://komonews.com/news/local/school-districts-prepare-for-large-summer-school-enrollment</a>
GIST	<p>LYNNWOOD, Wash. — Many Western Washington school districts say they are adjusting to help students who have fallen behind during the course of the pandemic over the past few months.</p> <p>The Edmonds School District is even expecting to double its pre-COVID enrollment numbers for summer school, and they aren't alone.</p> <p>More and more Washington families are choosing summer school to help their students catch up from all the disruptions brought on by the pandemic.</p> <p>“Right now he's behind in reading and a little bit in math, too,” said Maria Delrio, whose child is a student in the Kenmore School District, and why she plans to enroll her 7-year-old son in summer school.</p> <p>The Edmonds district is expecting to double its usual number of students enrolled for the summer.</p> <p>That's around 800 high schoolers and about 600 elementary and middle school students who are behind in subjects like math and literacy.</p> <p>“I don’t think we’re going to catch all up in summer school but it’s another step in our plan,” Assistant Superintendent Greg Schwab said, adding they're looking to support students who had no control over the interruptions over the past two years.</p> <p>Many districts say they could see large summer school enrollments this year.</p> <p>Even though the district's students returned to in-person learning this year, officials admit it was not the most effective in terms of instruction.</p> <p>“When we were in the middle of the omicron surge in January, students were in quarantine for 10 days at a time,” Schwab said. “Teachers were missing school because they were being quarantined (and) we had a shortage of subs.”</p> <p>They say these students just weren't able to make the same progress they would in a normal school year, both academically and socially.</p> <p>“Student mental health concerns are probably the highest they’ve ever been,” Schwab said. “And so we know that’s a part of our summer school as well, really focusing on keeping our kids connected.”</p> <p>The district said it's on target to get the estimated 100 teachers it needs to meet summer school demand.</p> <p>“Summer school principals are at work hiring teachers and identifying students,” Schwab said. “And I think we’ll have enough.”</p> <p>The district said it had about 800 high school students enrolled last summer. They passed a total of 700 courses.</p>
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HEADLINE	<b>06/02 Summer could worsen blood shortage woes</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://komonews.com/news/local/42-years-and-counting-as-a-blood-donor-why-he-gives-why-others-should-too">https://komonews.com/news/local/42-years-and-counting-as-a-blood-donor-why-he-gives-why-others-should-too</a>

GIST	<p>TUKWILA, Wash. — Blood centers across Washington and the nation are sounding the alarm because of a shortage of donors to blood centers, which aim to keep at least a three-day supply on hand to be ready for any emergency or mass casualty situation.</p> <p>But most of those centers are down to a one- to two-day supply, and the upcoming summer season could make matters worse.</p> <p>Bloodworks Northwest, has 1,700 open appointments that need to be filled over the next ten days. Those appointments available at blood donor centers and popup-up drives, throughout Western Washington and Oregon. Donors help Bloodworks keep 95% of all hospitals in the region supplied with the blood and platelets they need to keep patients healthy and alive.</p> <p>“One in seven people entering a hospital rely on a ready blood supply to be available to them,” said Kate Fry, with America's Blood Centers.</p> <p>That’s the advocacy group for blood centers nationwide. She tells me blood banks need to collect 30,000 units of blood every day. Locally, Bloodworks Northwest needs to book 1,000 blood appointments a day.</p> <p>John Daniel books his appointments like clockwork every 56 days. He was giving blood early Thursday morning at Bloodworks’ Tukwila center.</p> <p>“I’ve given 220 units of blood, one pint at a time,” he said.</p> <p>“I had an older brother who died from leukemia and so I do this for him.”</p> <p>Bloodworks could use many donors like Daniel. In its weekly forecast, Bloodworks predicts it will reach emergency low levels of blood by mid-June - with less than 40% of the blood that's needed to treat patients from car crashes, shootings, cancer treatments and women with complications during childbirth.</p> <p>“About 65% of all Americans are eligible to donate blood but only 3% of all Americans actually do, each year,” said Fry.</p> <p>Fry says it's totally normal to be nervous, but she says giving blood is a simple, pain-free process that only takes about 45 minutes and she says it's totally safe.</p> <p>“The safety of the Blood Supply is the number one priority of every blood bank in the country. And so, there are established processes and regulations placed by the Food and Drug Administration that every blood center follows. And obviously, we want to make sure it’s a safe donation process as well as the donors and the patients who received that blood,” explained Fry.</p> <p>Once someone gives blood, it takes one to two days until it's ready for a patient. And the blood bank or hospital can store blood for about 45 to 50 days. Platelets however, only last five to seven days. The supply of platelets also at low levels right now, so anyone who can, is urged to donate platelets or blood.</p>
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HEADLINE	<b>06/02 Seattle cruise travel season up 50% 2019</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.q13fox.com/news/seattle-cruise-travel-up-50-over-2019-covid-cases-arent-a-deterrent-for-many">https://www.q13fox.com/news/seattle-cruise-travel-up-50-over-2019-covid-cases-arent-a-deterrent-for-many</a>
GIST	<p><b>SEATTLE</b> - Cases of COVID-19 are continuing to pop up on cruise ships nationally and internationally. However, it's not stopping large numbers of people from once again booking vacations on the water.</p> <p>The Port of Seattle says cruise travel is already up 50% from 2019 as people are eager to get back to traveling.</p>



"The numbers are really impressive. We are so excited to have all the ships back and you can see it on the weekends around town," said Linda Springmann, Port of Seattle Director of Cruise and Maritime Marketing. "We thought we'd see a build in May, as the ships coming back and we know by the second week of June, it really picks up after school is out. So we are really seeing the trend that we expected with the numbers growing."

"We are getting on the Royal Caribbean tomorrow," said Rebecca Janis, a cruise ship passenger.

The Seattle waterfront is once again bustling with visitors like the Janis family, who are taking a 7-day cruise to Alaska.

"We were originally supposed to take one in May back in 2020 and this is the chance to take that vacation we missed out on," said Stephen Janis.

The Janis family said they were all vaccinated and explained that the online testing process to board the ship was fairly easy, once they figured out the online system. Stephen told FOX 13 that his family was able to take the test in their hotel room.

"It was very quick and simple and done in 20 minutes," said Rebecca.

Sally Rosenberg, another cruise ship passenger, told us she was fully vaccinated and heading out on a cruise to Norway soon.

"It is a relief. A huge relief. We can get out and enjoy life again. It's wonderful," said Rosenberg. "The Norway cruise was canceled, so we are finally doing it."

Rosenberg said her cruise was going to take off from London. On Friday while in Seattle, she was planning to visit the Space Needle.

She isn't the only one taking in iconic Seattle sites. The number of people visiting Seattle's waterfront are at pre-pandemic levels, according to Andy Lipscomb, the owner of The Frankfurter hotdog stand at the center of the bustling waterfront.

"People have been starving to get out of the house," said Lipscomb "It is back in full force. It's not just trickling back, it's back. There is going to be a record number this year for 2022 as far as cruises go. I think it's 1.3 million cruise passengers expected to come through Seattle, which beats the old record by about 100,000 people."

The Port of Seattle has also estimated there will be around 1.2 million or more visitors, which includes passengers both coming in and going through the facilities.

As for COVID 19 cases, as of June 1, the Centers for Disease Control reported that nearly 90 cruise ships had COVID cases under investigation.

As of June 1, there were four ships [reported in the "green" category, which means there were no reported cases on those ships](#). Two ships were [designated as "yellow,"](#) which means the ship has reported less than 0.3% of its passengers and/or crew members have COVID-19.

87 ships, by far the highest number, were designated as "orange." That means the ship has reported that 0.3% or more of its passengers and/or crew members have COVID, enough for the CDC to investigate.

No ships were listed in the red zone, which could trigger more testing onboard, masking or other measures.

"If we just stop because of a low number, I think we give up a lot more than we get out of that," said Stephen.

The Janis family says they'll employ safety measures, but it's time to start living again.

"Handwashing, wearing masks in crowded places and still taking proper precautions-- it's going to be no different than if you are out and about on a normal day," said Rebecca.

The CDC says [cruise travel will always pose risk for COVID](#) and vaccination remains the best way to protect yourself against the virus.

As for tourist traffic in general in Seattle, James Sido, Director, Media Relations and Issues Management with the Downtown Seattle Association (DSA), said Seattle saw high numbers for foot traffic last week. He says across the 7-day period for total visits-- including workers, residents and visitors combined-- last week, Seattle averaged 380,000 daily.

He says the average is the highest DSA has seen since the start of the pandemic.

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HEADLINE	<b>06/02 Baby formula shortage out-stock rate 73.5%</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.q13fox.com/news/baby-formula-shortage-out-of-stock-rate-continues-to-worsen-jumping-to-73-5">https://www.q13fox.com/news/baby-formula-shortage-out-of-stock-rate-continues-to-worsen-jumping-to-73-5</a>
GIST	<p>The <a href="#">baby formula shortage</a> continues to impact many families and worsen as formula makers and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) investigate what led to the national crisis.</p> <p>For the week of May 22-May 29, the out-of-stock rate for <a href="#">infant formula</a> jumped to 73.58% nationwide, according to recent data by analytics firm Datasembly. This is nearly 4% higher than last week and is a significant increase from two weeks ago when the out-of-stock rate stood at 45%.</p> <p><b>Why is baby formula still in short supply?</b></p> <p>The problem was initiated by supply chain disruptions, which have caused major delays among retailers and companies. This has also caused stores to put limitations on how much <a href="#">baby formula customers</a> can buy.</p> <p>A safety recall issued earlier this year has also compounded these challenges.</p> <p>In February, the Food and Drug Administration warned consumers to avoid some powdered infant formula products from a Sturgis, Michigan, facility run by <a href="#">Abbott Nutrition</a>, which then initiated a voluntary recall.</p> <p><a href="#">According to findings released in March</a> by federal safety inspectors, Abbott failed to maintain sanitary conditions and procedures at the plant.</p> <p>Abbott Nutrition's Sturgis, Michigan, facility, which exacerbated the industry-wide shortage, is expected to restart production Saturday, but this still means products from the plant won't <a href="#">return to store shelves until at least mid-July</a>, according to the company's production timeline.</p> <p><a href="#">Nestle</a> is currently helping to ease the shortage by transporting Gerber baby foods from the Netherlands and Alfamino from Switzerland to the United States.</p> <p>A Nestle spokesperson in a statement to FOX Television Stations said: "We have brought in Gerber Good Start Extensive HA from the Netherlands and Alfamino from Switzerland for Nestle Health Science. We prioritized these products because they serve a critical medical purpose as they are for babies with cow's milk protein allergies. Of note, both products were already being imported so we were able to act quickly. We moved shipments up and rushed via air to help fill immediate needs."</p>

Nestle did not specify how much formula they shipped to the U.S.

### Where can I find infant formula?

"My advice in the time of [formula shortages](#) is not to be brand specific," Steven Miller, a pediatric gastroenterologist at Johns Hopkins Children's Center, told FOX. "This means that you can look around for other brands or store brands, which are often very good."

Experts say generic formulas are also FDA-approved and meet the same requirements as brand names. In addition, no generic formulas were impacted in February's recall.

If you're still struggling to find formula or your baby requires a specific brand, experts suggest talking with your pediatrician or calling a local food bank to see if they can help locate some options.

They also recommend checking with smaller stores and pharmacies, which may still have supplies when larger stores run out.

Infant formula can also be very costly, so for families who qualify based on income, Women, Infants and Children (WIC), a federal program like food stamps that serves to help families, can provide formula, free of charge.

Doctors also suggest seeking out local groups online. Many local parent groups have postings about unopened, unexpired formula canisters available to give away or sell. During this time, experts say it's okay to look for formula online, but check that it is sold by a reputable supplier, unopened and unexpired.

Bottom line: Blanco says if you cannot find any formula at all to call your pediatrician or local hospital. "There is not a parent that we have not been able to help," Dr. Cynthia Blanco, a neonatologist in Texas and a member of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) told FOX Television Stations.

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HEADLINE	06/02 Seattle PD chief responds to staffing crisis
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.kiro7.com/news/local/seattle-police-chief-diaz-responds-staffing-crisis-sexual-assault-cases/THDZT6Z23ZHPTGDSACGR7PTOSU/">https://www.kiro7.com/news/local/seattle-police-chief-diaz-responds-staffing-crisis-sexual-assault-cases/THDZT6Z23ZHPTGDSACGR7PTOSU/</a>
GIST	<p>SEATTLE — After an internal email from a Seattle Police Department captain revealed that there are cases every week that are not getting assigned because <a href="#">there are simply not enough detectives</a>, Police Chief Adrian Diaz issued a response on Thursday.</p> <p>The staffing crisis is affecting how cases are being handled by the Sexual Assault and Child Abuse Unit.</p> <p>An internal email from Captain Steve Hirjak on May 17 reads, "With our current shortages, we are currently leaving an average of 4.6 cases unassigned per week." The email says victim advocates will still reach out to all victims, but meanwhile, the police department is "maintaining a list of those cases that we will assign, but currently cannot assign due to staffing."</p> <p>The response from Diaz follows:</p> <p>"I wanted to provide you with a staffing update as we enter the second half of the year. The Seattle Police Department has seen a reduction of 402 officers/detectives deployable staff since 2019. These losses have been felt in every corner of SPD at a time when homicides and incidents of gunfire are on the rise in our city.</p> <p>"<a href="#">Recent news coverage</a> over our department's staffing issues has focused on the Sexual Assault Unit (SAU). Sexual violence is one of the most serious crimes our department investigates, and when I learned of staffing concerns in SAU in April, I immediately began work to bolster the unit with additional</p>

	<p>detectives, as well as non-police staff who provide support to victims of sexual violence. I was able to ensure the Investigations Bureau rapidly shifted an additional investigator to the unit, brought in support staff to SAU to process cases sent to prosecutors, and utilized skilled detectives in other units to aid in addressing SAU's caseload. I also engaged with organizations doing important work with survivors of sexual assault in our region, which led to expanded outreach by the city's Victim Support Team, to help survivors work through their trauma.</p> <p>"We will continue to build on that work, despite the many challenges that remain ahead. In 2019 we had 234 detectives. Three years later, we have 134.</p> <p>"In Patrol, officers are called on every day to augment low-staff levels across the city's five precincts. The department is also routinely called on to assist in the safety, security, and traffic control around major sporting and arts events in our city. SPD continues to actively recruit and hire excellent law enforcement officers, but we forecast it will take approximately five to ten years to return our staffing to pre-2020 levels.</p> <p>"I am thankful to our employees who have risen to meet our many challenges, working extra shifts and assisting colleagues in complex and necessary casework. They are working hard to keep our city safe. Our department will continue to carefully examine its use of limited resources. We know we must bring every crime victim and survivor the justice they deserve."</p>
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HEADLINE	<b>06/02 Oregon botched drug treatment plan</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.seattlepi.com/news/article/Oregon-botched-drug-treatment-plan-tied-to-17215993.php">https://www.seattlepi.com/news/article/Oregon-botched-drug-treatment-plan-tied-to-17215993.php</a>
GIST	<p>SALEM, Ore. (AP) — Efforts to get millions of dollars in funding to treatment centers and related services as part of Oregon's pioneering drug decriminalization have been botched even as drug addictions and overdoses increase, state officials and lawmakers said on Thursday.</p> <p>Oregonians passed Ballot Measure 110 in 2020 decriminalizing possession of personal amounts of heroin, cocaine, methamphetamine and other drugs — the first in the nation to do so. A person found with drugs receives a citation, like a traffic ticket, with the maximum \$100 fine waived if they call a hotline for a health assessment.</p> <p>The ballot measure redirected millions of dollars in tax revenue from the state's legal marijuana industry to treatment. But applications for funding stacked up after state officials underestimated the work required to vet them and get the money out the door, officials testified Thursday before the House Interim Committee on Behavioral Health. Only a tiny fraction of the available funds has been sent.</p> <p>"So clearly, if we were to do it over again, I would have asked for many more staff much quicker in the process," said state Behavioral Health Director Steve Allen. "We were just under-resourced to be able to support this effort, underestimated the work that was involved in supporting something that looked like this and partly we didn't fully understand it until we were in the middle of it."</p> <p>Allen, who works for the Oregon Health Authority, told lawmakers in the remote hearing that this \$300 million project has never been done before. He insisted it has strong potential, saying officials have "over-relied on traditional treatment."</p> <p>"The service array, the types of services that are included, the approach, the harm reduction, etc., are all designed by people who have experienced this and have, I think, some really interesting, good ideas about what these service systems ought to look like," he said. "So it's an experiment. I think we'll know more in a few years."</p> <p>Rep. Lily Morgan, a Republican from Grants Pass, said lives are being lost while the state waits for the ballot measure to have a positive effect.</p>

"Director, you've mentioned a couple of times that you're waiting to see, and yet we have overdoses increasing at drastic rates, in my community a 700% increase in overdoses and a 120% increase in deaths," Morgan told Allen. "How long do we wait before we have an impact that we're saving lives?"

Secretary of State Shemia Fagan appeared before the committee, and described her mother's struggles with heroin and methamphetamine addiction before she recovered. Fagan said Oregon remains in a drug abuse crisis, despite the ballot measure.

"When the voters of Oregon passed Measure 110, we did so because it was a change of policy in Oregon to improve the lives of people, to improve our communities," Fagan said. "And in the years since, we haven't seen that play out. ... Instead, in many communities in Oregon, we've seen the problem with drug addiction get worse."

Allen acknowledged there has been a "dramatic" increase in overdoses and overdose deaths statewide and attributed much of the cause to the recent arrival of methamphetamine laced with fentanyl, a synthetic opioid that is so powerful that a tiny amount can kill, and illicit pills containing fentanyl.

That adds urgency to the effort to provide treatment services and harm reduction, like medication to treat overdoses and needle exchanges, that the measure also pays for, he said. Advocates point out that the services are available to anyone in Oregon, not just those who were cited for possession.

"Getting these resources out to the community is incredibly important ... not just the harm reduction resources, but people who can support folks who are at risk for overdose," Allen said. "So time is of the essence."

Ian Green, an audits manager, said the ballot measure lacked clarity around roles of the health authority and the Oversight and Accountability Council that were established.

That "contributed to delays, confusions and strained relations," Green said. He also blamed the health authority for not always adequately supporting the council. Council co-chair Ron Williams said most of the available funds still haven't been released.

"I feel these challenges can be overcome and corrected with deliberate, intentional, focused effort and courageous, solution-oriented conversations," Williams said.

The health authority said \$40 million in funds have been disbursed.

But about \$265 million set aside for the 2021-23 biennium still hasn't been spent, said Devon Downesmith, spokeswoman for the Health Justice Recovery Alliance. Hundreds of providers, which screen the needs of people who use drugs, offer case management, treatment, housing and links to other services, are waiting for those funds.

Still, more than 16,000 Oregonians have accessed services through Measure 110 funding, according to the Drug Policy Alliance, which spearheaded the measure.

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HEADLINE	06/02 Local govts turn down \$73M pandemic aid
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.seattlepi.com/news/article/Local-governments-turn-away-73M-of-federal-17214997.php">https://www.seattlepi.com/news/article/Local-governments-turn-away-73M-of-federal-17214997.php</a>
GIST	<p>JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (AP) — From small towns to big cities, every government across the U.S. was offered a slice of \$350 billion in federal coronavirus relief funds to help shore up their finances, cover pandemic-related costs and invest in community projects.</p> <p>Officials in 1,468 local governments effectively said "no," turning away a potential total of \$73 million, according to an Associated Press analysis of data compiled from every state. The declined money ranged</p>

from \$177 for the one-person village of Monowi, Nebraska, to \$3.9 million for DeWitt County, Texas, population about 20,000.

The city of West Alton, Missouri — a community of more than 500 at the confluence of the Mississippi and Missouri rivers — turned down a potential \$106,341 in federal aid. Though the rejected amount was almost half the size of the city's budget, there wasn't much discussion about accepting it during a city council meeting.

"The conversation probably lasted 15 seconds. Without having really any need for it, it wasn't something we felt like we wanted to get in the middle of," Mayor Willie Richter said.

Other small-town mayors and village administrators provided a variety of reasons for rejecting the federal money. Some thought they had no eligible uses for it. Others didn't want the hassle of dealing with the federal bureaucracy, or were politically opposed to the financial aid approved last year by the Democratic-led Congress and President Joe Biden.

The AP's analysis identified 1,460 small cities, towns, villages or townships that declined a potential allocation of \$61 million. That amounts to about 5% of the nation's roughly 28,000 small local governments, but just 0.3% of the total dollars allotted for those entities. Eight counties also have forgone a total of \$12 million. No states or territories declined funds.

The U.S. Treasury Department said it was pleased with the overall response to the American Rescue Plan, which marked the first time it had distributed money to such a broad swath of governments across the U.S.

The program "was born out of an understanding that the economic effect of the crisis was being felt by jurisdictions of all sizes," said Jacob Leibenluft, the Treasury's chief recovery officer. He added: "The vast, vast, vast majority of recipients saw a need to use these funds."

The pandemic relief money began flowing to governments one year ago.

Data released by the Treasury show that, as of the end of 2021, a total of 1,756 states, territories and larger cities and counties had budgeted about \$106 billion of the initial \$208 billion they received. That money helped expand high-speed internet, assist residents with housing costs, provide aid to small businesses, shore up depleted unemployment funds and pay for public health initiatives and government services, among other things.

The Treasury hasn't released data yet on how smaller governments used the money.

A second payment for local governments could come from the Treasury as soon as this month. But smaller governments that rejected the initial payment aren't eligible for the second round — a source of regret among at least some local officials.

The Village of the Branch, on New York's Long Island, probably could have used the federal aid to improve the village hall, pave streets or repair water drainage systems, Mayor Mark Delaney said. But that wasn't clear to Delaney and other village board members when they declined the funds before New York's decision deadline in August. At that time, the eligible uses seemed limited and the federal reporting burdensome, Delaney said.

Under a final Treasury rule issued in January, the village could have used its entire \$183,149 allotment for almost any government services. But by then, the village's share already had been reallocated among other local New York governments.

"Because you did the right thing and you responded quickly, you basically lost out on an opportunity," Delaney said.



The Treasury Department said it worked with states and associations for local governments to simplify the application process, clarify the rules and encourage participation.

Larger governments that got paid directly by the federal government had no deadline to accept the money. Among smaller communities, some had more time to make decisions than others.

States were in charge of passing along funds to so-called “non-entitlement units” of government — generally cities with fewer than 50,000 residents. Once a state received that money, it had 30 days to distribute it. But some states requested as many as eight monthly extensions from the Treasury, pushing their deadlines into 2022.

The board of Algoma Township, Michigan, voted last July to decline its \$1.3 million allotment.

“We’re very liberty-oriented, and we didn’t want to be stuck as a township with any kind of strings attached or mandates,” said township Supervisor Kevin Green, who considers the federal aid a waste.

But as Michigan kept extending the response deadline — and township officials learned that their share would be redistributed to others — Green and some of his colleagues had a change of heart. They ultimately accepted the money. Though they haven’t spent it yet, it could help offset the rising costs — due to inflation — of planned park improvements, he said.

“As conservative as we are, we’re also practical,” Green said.

Minnesota, which has a more extensive township form of government than most states, had the greatest number of governments declining to apply for the federal aid. More than 500 local governments — about one-fifth of its “non-entitlement units” — turned away a potential total of \$11.8 million.

“We did everything we could to publicize this. We made a huge effort,” said Steve Fenske, general counsel of the Minnesota Association of Townships. But “we certainly don’t have full engagement. So some of them didn’t know it was going on.”

The Treasury’s online procedures posed a hurdle to some smaller governments, said Irma Esparza Diggs, senior executive and director of federal advocacy for the National League of Cities.

“If you’re unfamiliar with the federal grant process and what the reporting requirements are, the assumption is that it’s all going to be too complicated, and it’s always easier to give the funding back than to figure it out,” she said.

The chief executive of DeWitt County, located between Houston and San Antonio, said he turned down the federal aid because the county already had enough cash for its budget. He also raised concerns about the federal program.

“It seemed pretty selfish to manufacture a need to apply for federal dollars that are borrowed on the backs of the children and grandchildren of our county constituents,” DeWitt County Judge Daryl L. Fowler, a Republican, said in an email to the AP.

The upscale community of Brier, Washington — with fewer than 7,000 residents — turned down the largest amount among cities, at more than \$1.9 million. The city north of Seattle has a small staff that includes a police force and public works crew. But it has no sewage treatment plant, mental health facilities, cultural centers or low-income housing.

“We just don’t have a lot of the things that ordinarily cities would have to use the funds for,” Mayor Dale Kaemingk said.

As the lone resident of the northern Nebraska village of Monowi, Elsie Eiler runs both the town tavern and town government. She didn’t want the “mess” of dealing with the federal government.

	“The town is doing fine,” she said. “If it comes down to it and it needs some funds, I’ll put some in myself.”
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HEADLINE	<b>06/02 King Co. plans for Seattle City Hall Park</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/homeless/seattle-city-hall-park-encampments-wall/">https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/homeless/seattle-city-hall-park-encampments-wall/</a>
GIST	<p>Last June, 31-year-old Bradley Arabie was fatally stabbed at City Hall Park. The next month, an attempted rape occurred in a King County Courthouse bathroom next to the park.</p> <p>According to data provided by King County, Seattle police responded to calls for “premise checks” at City Hall Park seven times more often in the first seven months of 2021 than the year before.</p> <p>As social service agencies’ and mass shelters’ doors closed at the beginning of the pandemic, homeless encampments grew across the city, ballooning to sizes rarely seen. The growth was jarring for many, even in places like City Hall Park, which had long been a regular gathering place for people without housing, and often with overlying issues with substance use and mental and physical health.</p> <p>By the end of June, 33 King County Superior Court judges signed a letter calling on the city of Seattle to shut down the park. Hundreds of people, mostly county workers and their supporters, protested downtown for officials to address the public safety concerns in and around the park.</p> <p>The attention set off a chain reaction that has led to a likely change in ownership of the park from the city of Seattle to King County, which could bring with it some dramatic changes to the look and access of the 0.56-acre green space.</p> <p>King County officials want to close it off to homeless campers for good, with one of the leaders of the effort saying that the highly visible downtown location next to municipal offices makes it a symbol for whether the region is capable of addressing its homelessness crisis.</p> <p>“City Hall Park is an indicator issue for a larger problem,” said Metropolitan King County Councilmember Reagan Dunn, who is now running for a seat in U.S. Congress. “I mean, can we even get a half an acre right?”</p> <p>But some worry that the county would be taking a shortcut to eliminating sleeping at the park by closing off one of the only publicly accessible green spaces in downtown Seattle.</p> <p>Lisa Howard, executive director of the Alliance for Pioneer Square, says she lost trust in the county as she watched it rush to take over the park last summer in a process that she says didn’t do enough to involve the stakeholders of the park and didn’t examine or address the root causes of homelessness and crime in the park.</p> <p>“The people that lose out if this is done in a way that doesn’t cover the bases are some of our poorest populations,” Howard said. “There’s over 800 units of affordable low- and ultra-low-income housing around the space.”</p> <p><b>Plans to prevent future encampments</b></p> <p>The appearance of the park might contribute to that concern. For the last 10 months, City Hall Park has been fenced off and closed.</p> <p>“It is the county’s objective to avoid future encampments at City Hall Park,” according to a report prepared in January by King County Executive Dow Constantine’s office on how the county would manage City Hall Park if the land transfer goes through.</p> <p>To do so, officials want to increase security enforcement in the park.</p>

“More security officers in place, security cameras, 24/7 surveillance, all kinds of things,” Dunn said. Fellow Councilmember Jeanne Kohl-Welles said she introduced the land transfer agreement partly so the county would have jurisdiction to assign county sheriffs deputies to the park.

The county also plans to turn the park into something of a courtyard for the directly adjacent county courthouse, opening up the courthouse’s south entrance and turning the temporary fence into something more permanent. Council members said the wall would help sheriff’s deputies monitor the park and enforce park hours.

“Not like Trump’s wall, just to be clear,” Dunn said. “But like a four- or five-foot-high brick wall that you could see through, maybe with some cool wrought iron.”

The county executive’s report also said the county would continue efforts begun by the city of Seattle before the pandemic to “activate” the park, which would include using food trucks, live music and recreational activities to increase foot traffic in the park — efforts to make it “naturally” safer.

Tija Petrovich, president of the Pioneer Square Residents Council, balked at the county’s idea of a permanent barrier or fence around the park. An opponent of the transfer, she said she didn’t want to give the park, a piece of Seattle’s history, away to an entity further removed from the people of Seattle.

“This is our responsibility. This is Seattle’s responsibility,” Petrovich said.

While homeless people would not be allowed to sleep there, the county said it would build a hygiene center near the park so people could wash their clothes and take showers.

#### **“I don’t think anybody’s going to come back”**

If tents return to City Hall Park while under King County control, the county intends to utilize the same approach used by the city last year to connect people to housing.

But that approach was expensive. The city of Seattle gave \$15 million to JustCARE, an outreach and shelter organization, to address homelessness in Pioneer Square, downtown Seattle and Chinatown International District, with the intent that a major focus of those funds would be to house people staying in City Hall Park.

The nonprofit worked the site hard, concentrating staff and financial resources on moving as many people as possible from tents into shelter and housing.

All but two of the people who were staying at the park were referred to shelters, tiny houses and hotel rooms, according to JustCARE.

The organization said many of those individuals are moving on to permanent housing, like 35-year-old Kaliyah Tramble, who had lived in the park on and off through the pandemic.

“It’s surprising, it’s amazing, it’s a blessing, and I’m happy about it,” Tramble said of the prospect of stable housing. “I’m very grateful that I have got the opportunity and a second chance to get my roof back over my head.”

The county executive’s office did not respond when asked if the county currently has any funds dedicated for the intensive outreach and shelter-placement efforts they say they’d use, or for any of the other projects they want to undertake in City Hall Park.

Derrick Belgarde, executive director of Chief Seattle Club, one of the organizations opposing the transfer, agrees with council members that the presence of law enforcement could help make the park safer, but he worries whether the county would strike the right balance in its enforcement.

“I don’t want to criminalize homelessness, and I don’t want a police state,” Belgarde said. “I don’t want police kicking people out of parks because they’re homeless.”

John Wilson, 61, said he moved to City Hall Park near the start of the pandemic after he was pushed out of Ballard’s Leary Triangle because of an encampment fire there. The search for a place to avoid being moved was a story he heard from many staying at City Hall Park.

“Everybody had been kicked out of somewhere,” Wilson said.

Several years ago, there were only a handful of people staying overnight, said Dan Malone, executive director of Downtown Emergency Service Center, whose office is across the street from the park. Sometimes, there were no tents there.

But during the pandemic there were fewer places for homeless people to stay inside and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention told cities to stop moving unsheltered homeless people around. At its peak, outreach workers counted over 100 tents clustered in the park.

“It wasn’t supposed to be like that,” Wilson said. “It filled up too full. There were too many people and there were fights and fires and battles. It was generating the wrong people.”

But the conditions that caused City Hall Park to fill up are largely gone. Since taking office, Seattle Mayor Bruce Harrell’s administration has largely returned to the city’s pre-pandemic approach of aggressively removing encampments.

Wilson said outreach workers at City Hall Park missed him, so after he was kicked out of the park and the fence went up, he moved between Ballard and downtown, eventually connecting with a social service worker who found him an apartment that he will move into later this month.

“I don’t think anybody’s going to come back that was there,” Wilson said. “They’ve already gone into where they wanted to go. They’re not stuck there.”

### **A park that has grass**

In December, the King County Council voted down an amendment that would have guaranteed City Hall Park would remain a park in perpetuity.

That worries some who are afraid that the county could someday develop the space into something other than a park.

“That park is like the last park that has grass in Pioneer Square,” said Eido, a resident of Frye Apartments located across the street from City Hall Park, who also opposes the transfer of the park to King County. He said he misses the freedom of being able to walk his dog in the park now that it is fenced off and closed.

For their part, the current County Council members have stated they have no intention to turn the park into anything else.

The transfer could be months, or even years, away, as 12 parcels of county-owned land promised to the city in exchange for the park are under state environmental review. After that, the Seattle City Council would have to sign off.

Harrell spokesperson Jamie Housen wrote in an email that the timeline for reopening City Hall Park would depend on the land transfer.

The mayor agrees with the county that increased security could help make City Hall Park a safer and more welcoming place, Housen said.

	<p>While the mayor has so far taken a more enforcement-heavy approach to encampments — similar to what the county is proposing for the park — Housen said that Harrell respects the agreement made between the former mayor and King County and so plans to go along with the transfer.</p> <p>“Mayor Harrell remains committed to keeping parks accessible to all and clear of encampments,” Housen said.</p>
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HEADLINE	<b>06/02 King Co. rollout free youth transit fare plan</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/transportation/king-county-rolls-out-plan-for-free-youth-transit-fares/">https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/transportation/king-county-rolls-out-plan-for-free-youth-transit-fares/</a>
GIST	<p>Transit will be free in King County for people 18 and under in time for the start of the next school year, pending council approval of legislation introduced Thursday by King County Executive Dow Constantine.</p> <p>The rollout is part of a statewide effort to provide free bus, train and ferry rides for youth in most or all of Washington, after the state Legislature approved a nearly \$17 billion transportation funding package in the 2022 session. Of \$3 billion set aside for transit by the state, \$1.45 billion is contingent on local transit agencies making rides free for people 18 and under.</p> <p>King County is eligible for an estimated \$31.7 million in grant funding from the state if it approves the free ridership program, which is estimated to cost around \$10 million.</p> <p>“It’s important during these early years to introduce young people to transit, regardless of their family’s economic status,” Constantine said. “Because we need folks across the economic spectrum using transit on a daily basis if we’re going to meet our environmental goals, if we’re going to have a functioning transportation system and not all be mired in traffic.”</p> <p>The legislation introduced amends county law to say there is no cost for people under 19 to ride King County Metro. It’s sponsored by Councilmember Dave Upthegrove.</p> <p>The program has been cheered by local officials, who view it as a way to increase ridership while making public transportation use a habit among young people. Three of the Metropolitan King County Council’s nine members have voiced support. The council will take up the legislation in June or July.</p> <p>Logistical challenges remain. County officials must work out a system that distinguishes between riders who are 18 and under and those who aren’t. Constantine said he’s confident the ORCA system can handle the distinction. The challenge, he said, will be getting cards in the hands of young people.</p> <p>“We’ll be working with community partners, first and foremost schools, to make sure that young people can get the physical fare media, which could be something as simple as a sticker that goes on their existing ORCA card, or more likely for a young person, an app that you can download,” he said.</p> <p>As part of the requirement to receive money from the state, the county will need to tally the number of riders under 19 using the transit system for free. Constantine said there inevitably will be a transition period this fall and Metro won’t stop young people from riding for free if they don’t have the right card, sticker or app.</p> <p>Middle and high school students in Seattle Public Schools are already eligible to ride free with their ORCA card during the school year. The county is advising any youth, student or not, to hang on to their ORCA card to use this fall as the ridership program rolls out.</p> <p>The county estimates there are 329,000 K-12 students in the county, but only 25,000 have a subsidized ORCA card.</p>

	<p>So far, every transit agency in the state has signaled they will adopt policies by the Oct. 1 deadline to make transit free for youth riders. Ben Franklin Transit near the Tri-Cities expressed initial reluctance, before announcing it would opt in to the program.</p> <p>As for safety concerns on buses, ridership on King County Metro buses is still around half of what it was pre-pandemic. Constantine said increasing ridership will improve the perception of safety on transit.</p> <p>“The more people we have using the system — students, workers, commuters — the safer the environment is going to be,” he said.</p>
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HEADLINE	<b>06/02 Sound Transit CEO nominee: ‘Candidate A’</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/transportation/sound-transit-has-chosen-a-nominee-for-new-ceo-but-wont-yet-reveal-the-front-runners-name/">https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/transportation/sound-transit-has-chosen-a-nominee-for-new-ceo-but-wont-yet-reveal-the-front-runners-name/</a>
GIST	<p>Sound Transit board members say they’ve chosen a well-qualified leader to succeed CEO Peter Rogoff this summer, but wouldn’t name on Thursday their pick to steer the nation’s largest public transit expansion program.</p> <p>Members of the transit board’s CEO Search Committee identified this person only as “Candidate A,” after a closed-door executive session Thursday morning. Three finalists made it to the final round of online interviews this week, from a field of 90.</p> <p>The next step is to conduct contract talks before a final vote scheduled June 23, for all 18 board members to approve the package. The advertised salary is between \$300,000 and \$400,000 per year.</p> <p>Sound Transit chose not to reveal the front-runner’s name after board member Snohomish County Executive Dave Somers asked at the start of Thursday’s session if it would cause problems to identify the choice before that person had been contacted to accept the job.</p> <p>Board Chair Kent Keel, a University Place council member, didn’t say how soon he will disclose the nominee. “We need to just hold the name in confidence for a bit longer. We need to move forward with a couple issues in contract negotiations.”</p> <p>The vote for “Candidate A” prompted Kathy George, a board member at the Washington Coalition for Open Government, to comment: “This process raises a very serious question about whether a final decision was made in a closed meeting. It sounds like Sound Transit has decided to hire Candidate A. Final decisions are supposed to be made in an open public meeting.”</p> <p>If anything, this year’s process is slightly more transparent than in November 2015, when then-Chair Dow Constantine, the King County executive, <a href="#">announced the selection of Rogoff</a>, a former chief of the Federal Transit Administration, only one day before the formal board vote by all 18 members.</p> <p>In some local cases, such as Seattle police chief and King County sheriff selections, three finalists were named and public feedback encouraged.</p> <p>Sound Transit spokesperson Geoff Patrick said the staff needs to coordinate the timing of a news release with Keel, sometime before June 23.</p> <p>The next CEO will have a huge mission with resources to match. Sound Transit collects about \$3 billion per year from voter-approved taxes and federal grants. It has earned the nation’s best credit rating. And there’s the opportunity to boost ridership, aided by new <a href="#">U District, Roosevelt and Northgate stations</a> that opened last October.</p>



Sound Transit 3, approved by voters in 2016 under Rogoff’s watch, is still near the starting line. If completed, the network could carry 750,000 daily passengers, mainly over 116 miles of light-rail tracks, a length similar to metro Washington, D.C.’s subways.

“If you’re looking to make an impact and help shape the future of transportation, help us make history,” a [recruiting brochure](#) for the job beckoned.

The new leader is stepping into crises that have damaged Sound Transit’s reputation with travelers. The 33-year-old [downtown station escalators](#) and elevators, formerly managed by King County Metro Transit, frequently fail and might not be fully replaced for nine years. Elected officials let security dwindle so far that [it is not unusual for fentanyl to be smoked openly](#) on trains and in stations. In March, a random attacker threw a nurse [down a station stairway](#). Next month, riders will be delayed by tile repair at Columbia City Station that reduces mainline service to 20-minute frequency.

Light-rail ridership is bouncing back from the pandemic, but only 89,400 passengers per weekday rode all Sound Transit services in March, or 57% of March 2019 counts.

The recruiting pitch and interviews focused largely on “soft skills,” to lead 1,400 employees and to navigate agreements with dozens of governments. Rogoff was nearly fired in 2018 after employees complained about his abrasive style, which he improved with help from executive coaching.

Rogoff’s final day was May 31, more than six years after he was recruited in late 2015. He spent his first year preparing ST3, a winning 2016 ballot measure that increased property, car-tab and sales taxes to fund a massive set of transit extensions. Rogoff secured \$2 billion in FTA grants for Lynnwood and Federal Way lines due to open in 2024, along with low-cost loans for the 2024 Redmond line and others. He plans to continue living in Seattle and hasn’t announced any career moves.

[Sound Transit 3](#) is an estimated \$6.5 billion short before 11 of the 12 new voter-approved rail and bus corridors break ground. The whole finance plan from 2017-46 has swelled to \$142 billion.

Of the 90 applicants for the CEO position, 14 were considered highly qualified, according to Keel.

Evaluations took place behind closed doors. The state’s Open Meetings Act allows agencies that leeway to evaluate applicants’ qualifications. The search was done by CPS-HR of Sacramento, under a \$200,000 contract and strict confidentiality.

Some people might hesitate to apply if their job hunting could be revealed to current employers, Patrick said.

The agency gave special access to several transit interest groups and “partner agencies,” such as local governments, during a round of video interviews Tuesday, to meet three finalists. They along with transit board members signed nondisclosure agreements, according to several participants.

“It’s unseemly for a public agency to require nondisclosure agreements,” said George, of the open government coalition, “especially for something as important as hiring a CEO. After all, isn’t the general public the biggest ‘stakeholder’?”

Patrick said the process was Keel’s way to broaden community involvement. “You can’t have a conversation with the whole region,” Patrick said. Sound Transit executives and employee groups joined the Tuesday sessions, for a total of 48 attendees plus five board members, he said.

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HEADLINE	06/02 Whatcom Co. flood victims still struggling
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.king5.com/article/news/local/disaster/whatcom-county-flooding-mental-health-struggles-displaced/281-e4a7aa8b-48da-4130-8479-c4de351a3bbe">https://www.king5.com/article/news/local/disaster/whatcom-county-flooding-mental-health-struggles-displaced/281-e4a7aa8b-48da-4130-8479-c4de351a3bbe</a>

GIST	<p>SUMAS, Wash — More than six months after historic flooding in Whatcom County, the damage is now taking a deeper toll.</p> <p>Hundreds of people are still out of their homes and now mental health struggles are surging in the community.</p> <p>Houses sit propped up on makeshift wooden foundations along city streets in Sumas. People are raising their homes in an attempt to avoid more damage from future flooding. The projects are just some of many changes being felt nearly seven months after the waters have receded.</p> <p>"There's still a lot that needs to be done out there," said Kyle Christensen, who is leading Whatcom County's flood recovery effort.</p> <p>A total of 2,000 homes were damaged in sprawling floods that soaked northern Whatcom County last November.</p> <p>Right now eight case workers are helping more than 500 people navigate the storm's aftermath. More than 30 of those people are still staying in motels.</p> <p>Damage is estimated at \$150 million, but the costs to mental health are causing even more concern.</p> <p>"One of our disaster case managers was on the phone talking to somebody for almost two hours," said Christensen. "Just very lonely, very sad, very depressed. They just need somebody to listen to them."</p> <p>Christensen knows the community well. He's the former mayor of Sumas who took a year-long position to manage how the county deals with the aftermath of November's floods and prepares for those to come.</p> <p>He says housing, workforce and supply shortages are slowing efforts to get people back in their homes.</p> <p>About 55 people have taken the federal government up on offers to buy their flood-prone homes or raise their foundations. That money can take up to five years to receive, however.</p> <p>Some people have even moved back into homes contaminated with mold because they have nowhere else to go.</p> <p>"I think a lot of people are making decisions based on their financial ability and by available housing," said Christensen. "There's just very little affordable housing out there. It's not a healthy set of circumstances."</p> <p>It's all making for a very stressful situation as people sit stymied -- wondering what comes next -- with hope running out.</p> <p>"Because of the state that families are in, it's been over 6 months and they're feeling the pressure and the anxiety of not being back in their homes," said Christensen. "It's not a good living situation. They're away from where they feel safe and comfortable. They're desperate."</p> <p>Next week officials are meeting to address mental health, mold and other flood-related issues, as well as make plans for how to handle the next flood season which is only four or five months away.</p>
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HEADLINE	06/02 People food allergies less prone to Covid?
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.king5.com/article/news/health/coronavirus/people-with-food-allergies-less-prone-to-covid-infection/507-09190e9d-77d4-4358-9c1a-52b43f9b1148">https://www.king5.com/article/news/health/coronavirus/people-with-food-allergies-less-prone-to-covid-infection/507-09190e9d-77d4-4358-9c1a-52b43f9b1148</a>

GIST	<p>WASHINGTON — A food allergy can be quite the inconvenience, but it could also mean you're less susceptible to contracting the COVID-19 virus, <a href="#">a new study from the National Institutes of Health has found</a>.</p> <p>The Human Epidemiology and Response to SARS-CoV-2 (HEROS) study involved more than 4,000 people in nearly 1,400 households and found that having a self-reported, physician-diagnosed food allergy cut a person's risk of infection in half.</p> <p>However, the study also found having asthma and other allergic conditions - like eczema and allergic rhinitis - were not associated with reduced COVID infection risk.</p> <p>While researchers are still not certain why having food allergies may reduce the risk of COVID infection, they speculate it may have to do with a protein called an ACE2 receptor. According to the study, the type of inflammation provoked by a food allergy may reduce the levels of ACE2 on the surface of airway cells, and COVID is known to use this receptor in order to enter cells.</p> <p>The study surveillance took place between May 2020 and February 2021, before the widespread rollout of COVID-19 vaccines and <a href="#">before the delta and omicron variants</a> appeared. Researchers found everyone in the study had around a 14% chance of contracting COVID-19 during the six-month surveillance period.</p> <p>The findings were published Wednesday in the <a href="#">Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology</a>.</p> <p>Still, the study also found that the risk of transmission in a household with a child regardless of allergy status was high, with experts noting their high rate of asymptomatic infection, potentially high viral loads and close physical interactions with relatives. Researchers underscored that vaccines are still the most effective mechanism to prevent infection or severe disease.</p> <p>“The HEROS study findings underscore the importance of vaccinating children and implementing other public health measures to prevent them from becoming infected with SARS-CoV-2, thus protecting both children and vulnerable members of their household from the virus,” said Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy, and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), part of NIH.</p> <p>The HEROS study also monitored other risk factors for COVID infection and confirmed that obesity was a leading contributor to infection. According to the research, every 10-point increase in body-mass index (BMI) percentile raised the risk of infection by 9%.</p> <p>"The observed association between food allergy and the risk of infection with SARS-CoV-2, as well as between body-mass index and this risk, merit further investigation," Fauci said.</p>
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HEADLINE	<b>06/02 Preparing WA for another wildfire season</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.kiro7.com/news/local/preparing-washington-another-wildfire-season/7YIM66VAUZFKTK7O3KSWI5WYTE/">https://www.kiro7.com/news/local/preparing-washington-another-wildfire-season/7YIM66VAUZFKTK7O3KSWI5WYTE/</a>
GIST	<p>It's almost the start of summer, which means wildfire season has already begun, but what's the risk for Washington?</p> <p>The Washington State Department of Natural Resources held a wildfire orientation on Thursday to discuss fire readiness and urging people to practice extreme caution in the coming months.</p> <p>Meteorologist Matthew Dehr said the recent weather has caused a late start to fire season.</p> <p>“We are in the strongest La Nina for the month of April and May for the last 72 years,” Dehr said.</p> <p>“There's some data going back, and it's only strengthened three times in the last 72 years through the spring months and that's the culprit for our wet April and May.”</p>

With the recent stretch of wet and cooler weather conditions, the fire outlook isn't looking as severe.

"This is the weather pattern we're looking at," Dehr said. "We'll have a big high over the central Pacific. The Great Basin low is going to be below normal. That will give us onshore flow across Western Washington. The heat can migrate up to Eastern Washington a little easier, but to start out this season, the onshore flow should keep us below average for the month of June."

It's been a lighter fire season this spring with statistics of fire crews responding to fewer fires compared to last spring, but officials warn to be on the lookout for our ever-changing weather patterns.

For the first part of the year, firefighters have kept 95% of the fires to ten acres or less.

As of May 31, just over 75 acres have burned on Department of Natural Resources land with 74 fires having occurred on the east side of the state and just seven on the west side.

Those totals are much lower than in April last year.

Recreational fire continues to be the top cause of forest fires.

Meteorologists predict the west coast will see its first heatwave in the next seven to 14 days, primarily in California.

Officials said we are most likely to see less fire potential through June, an increase in July, with August and September being the most challenging months.

The Department of Natural Resources added they're also struggling to recruit firefighters and are always looking for more to join the team.

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HEADLINE	<b>06/02 Coast Guard part of Indo-Pacific strategy</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.cnn.com/2022/06/02/asia/us-coast-guard-pacific-islands-china-intl-hnk-ml/index.html">https://www.cnn.com/2022/06/02/asia/us-coast-guard-pacific-islands-china-intl-hnk-ml/index.html</a>
GIST	<p>As China's foreign minister began <a href="#">a Pacific islands tour</a> to promote economic and security cooperation with Beijing, the smallest of the US government's armed services was already on the scene, reinforcing Washington's longstanding commitment to the region.</p> <p>Reacting to a request from the Solomon Islands, the first stop in Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi's 10-day regional diplomatic tour, the US Coast Guard diverted its cutter Myrtle Hazard to patrol the island nation's exclusive economic zone after a Solomons police vessel needed repairs.</p> <p>The US cutter "helped to fill the operational presence needed by conducting maritime surveillance to deter illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing in the northern Solomon Islands," a Coast Guard press release said.</p> <p>The Myrtle Hazard was already in the region as part of Operation Blue Pacific, what the Coast Guard calls its "overarching multi-mission ... endeavor promoting security, safety, sovereignty, and economic prosperity in Oceania while strengthening relationships."</p> <p>The Solomon Islands is just one of several Pacific island nations the US aids under Operation Blue Pacific, including, among others, Kiribati, Samoa, Fiji, Tonga and Papua New Guinea – all stops on the Chinese foreign minister's tour.</p> <p>China had proposed a sweeping regional security and economic agreement with a number of Pacific Island nations, according to documents seen by CNN. The deal, which touched on a range of areas including</p>

education and health, was targeted for a Monday meeting between Wang and foreign ministers from 10 Pacific island nations in Fiji.

The meeting ended without the signing of the proposed agreement, with Wang instead noting the grouping had landed on five “points of consensus.” Those areas, largely general statements such as deepening strategic partnership and pursuing common development, did not include security.

The pact, if accepted, would have marked a significant advance in Beijing’s connection to the region, which holds geo-strategic importance in the Indo-Pacific.

Wang Yi defended China’s intentions during the media briefing in Fiji on Monday, referencing “questions” about why China was “actively supporting” Pacific Island countries.

“Don’t be too anxious and don’t be too nervous, because the common development and prosperity of China and all the other developing countries would only mean great harmony, greater justice and greater progress of the whole world,” he said.

### **Coast Guard a part of Indo-Pacific strategy**

Amid the Chinese push, the US Coast Guard’s efforts in the region haven’t received much attention. But they are substantial, and part of the Biden administration’s [Indo-Pacific strategy](#) released in February.

“We will expand US Coast Guard presence and cooperation in Southeast and South Asia and the Pacific Islands, with a focus on advising, training, deployment, and capacity-building,” the strategy’s action plan says.

The Coast Guard’s website shows cutters have spent hundreds of days and steamed thousands of miles in the past two years helping Pacific island nations.

One of the key parts of Washington’s influence in the region is through “shiprider agreements” with 11 Pacific nations, including Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Palau, Nauru, Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu, according to US Coast Guard publications. Under these agreements, defense and law enforcement personnel from the partner nations embark aboard the US cutters to enforce their nation’s laws in the island nations’ exclusive economic zones.

The relationships the US Coast Guard has forged in the Pacific islands have deep roots, said Collin Koh, research fellow at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies in Singapore.

That “institutionalized network of defense and security relationships” is something Beijing would have a hard time duplicating, Koh said.

“It doesn’t enjoy the extent of partnership networks that its geopolitical rivals, the US included, have cultivated in the region for decades,” Koh said.

With fish as the main food source and key economic driver of the island nations, the Coast Guard says the emphasis of Operation Blue Pacific is to deter illegal and unregulated fishing.

And that has a big link to China.

With the world’s largest fishing fleet, “Chinese-flagged fishing vessels range the world over in search of catch and are notorious for fishing within other nations’ – especially developing nations’ – exclusive economic zones (EEZs),” according to a 2021 report from the Brookings Institution.

Koh said the scope of Chinese fishing activities doesn’t help Beijing’s case for being a positive force in the region.

“Chinese fishing vessels are not necessarily viewed in a benign manner – they are large distant water fishing fleets, equipped with large and better-equipped vessels that can outrun, outmuscle and outfish local fishing boats,” he said.

#### **US Coast Guard the “near-perfect” tool**

Carl Schuster, a retired US Navy captain and a former director of operations at the US Pacific Command’s Joint Intelligence Center, said the Coast Guard is “near perfect ... for relations building with Pacific Island countries.”

Coast Guard cutters are not threatening vessels, associated with rescuing people as much as anything else, Schuster said.

“You cannot understate the Coast Guard’s importance to ... relationships in the Central and Western Pacific,” he said.

While some observers note that China also has a well-equipped coast guard that could do what the US is doing in the region, Koh doesn’t see that happening, at least in the near term.

He notes Beijing’s troubles in waters closer to home, in places like the South and East China seas, where disputes over fishing rights and territorial claims keep the Chinese coast guard busy.

Those also bring in China’s credibility as a fair broker into question, he said, leaving an advantage to the US Coast Guard.

“It’s difficult to imagine China having sufficient political capital to push for something analogous to what the US is currently doing,” Koh said.

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HEADLINE	<b>06/02 Careening toward 1970’s-style energy crisis</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.cnn.com/2022/06/02/business/energy-crisis-inflation/index.html">https://www.cnn.com/2022/06/02/business/energy-crisis-inflation/index.html</a>
GIST	<p>The world is grappling with gravity-defying energy price spikes on everything from <a href="#">gasoline</a> and natural gas to coal. Some fear this may just be the beginning.</p> <p>Current and former energy officials tell CNN they worry that <a href="#">Russia’s invasion of Ukraine</a> in the wake of <a href="#">years of underinvestment</a> in the energy sector have sent the world careening into a crisis that will rival or even exceed the <a href="#">oil crises of the 1970s</a> and early 1980s.</p> <p>Unlike those infamous episodes, this one is not contained to oil.</p> <p>“Now we have an oil crisis, a gas crisis and an electricity crisis at the same time,” Fatih Birol, head of the International Energy Agency watchdog group, told Der Spiegel in an interview published this week. “This energy crisis is much bigger than the oil crises of the 1970s and 1980s. And it will probably last longer.”</p> <p>The global economy has largely been able to withstand surging energy prices so far. But prices could continue to rise to unsustainable levels as Europe attempts to wean itself off Russian oil and, potentially, gas. Supply shortages could lead to some difficult choices in Europe, including rationing.</p> <p>Joe McMonigle, secretary general of the International Energy Forum, said he agrees with this depressing forecast from the IEA.</p> <p>“We have a serious problem around the world that I think policymakers are just waking up to. It’s kind of a perfect storm,” McMonigle, whose group serves as a go-between for energy producing and consuming nations, told CNN in a phone interview.</p>



The extent of that perfect storm – underinvestment, strong demand and supply disruptions from the war – will have wide-reaching consequences, potentially threatening the economic recovery from Covid-19, [exacerbating inflation](#), fueling social unrest and undermining efforts to save the planet from global warming.

Birol warned of supply bottlenecks of gasoline and diesel, especially in Europe, as well as rationing of natural gas next winter in Europe.

“It is a crisis for which the world is woefully unprepared,” said Robert McNally, who served as a top energy adviser to former US President George W. Bush.

Not only are energy prices very high, but the [reliability of the power grid is being challenged](#) by extreme temperatures and severe drought. A US power grid regulator warned last month that parts of the country [could face electricity shortages](#) and even blackouts this summer.

### **‘Our fears have borne out’**

Former Obama energy adviser Jason Bordoff and Harvard University professor Meghan O’Sullivan wrote a piece in the [Economist](#) in late March warning that the world was on the cusp of “what may become the worst energy crisis since the 1970s.”

“Since we wrote that, our fears have borne out,” Bordoff, co-founding dean of the Columbia Climate School, told CNN.

Of course, there are key differences between today and the 1970s. Prices have not spiked nearly as much as they did then and policymakers have not resorted to extreme steps like price controls.

“Were we to resort to price controls and price caps, then we could have shortages,” McNally said.

When the war started, the West sought to avoid targeting Russia’s energy supplies directly because it was simply too critical to global markets. Russia is not just the world’s largest oil exporter, but it is the biggest natural gas exporter and a major supplier of coal.

But as the brutality of the war became clear to the world, that hands-off approach did not last, with the United States and other countries banning Russian energy imports.

Russia retaliated against Western sanctions by restricting or [even halting its shipment of natural gas](#) to multiple European countries.

The European Union announced plans this week to phase out 90% of Russian oil imports by the end of the year. That move has raised the specter of further retaliation from Russia.

This tit-for-tat situation has only worsened the supply shortfall in energy markets that were already tight. “We have not yet seen how bad this energy crisis is going to get,” Bordoff said.

Already, US gasoline prices have surged by 52% over the past year to record highs, angering the public and contributing to the nation’s inflation crisis.

Prices for natural gas, a vital fuel for heating homes and powering the electric grid, have nearly tripled over the past year in the United States. Natural gas prices have skyrocketed even further in Europe, though they are well off their worst levels.

### **‘Putin just brought us there faster’**

Today’s energy turmoil is not simply the result of the war in Ukraine. It is also the byproduct of cratering investment in oil and natural gas, which are depleting resources that require massive sums of money just to maintain their production, let alone increase it.



Upstream investment in the oil and gas sector stood at just \$341 billion in 2021, [23% below the pre-Covid level](#) of \$525 billion and well below the recent peak in 2014 of \$700 billion, according to the IEF.

This investment shortfall has been brought on by a series of factors, including a push among investors and governments to bet on clean energy, the uncertain future of fossil fuels and years of weak and volatile oil prices.

“Because of the desire to bring down carbon emissions, we have a lot less appetite to invest in hydrocarbons. And that exacerbates the price volatility and makes it more difficult to resolve the supply side,” said Francisco Blanch, head of global commodities at Bank of America.

Europe was already grappling with an energy crisis last year and prices for natural gas, coal and oil were high long before the first Russian tanks began rolling into Ukraine.

“We were heading towards a crisis anyway. Putin just brought us there faster and sharper,” said McNally, who is now the president of consulting firm Rapidan Energy Group.

### **Shortages and gas lines?**

The [1973 oil crisis](#) was marked by hours-long lines at gas stations, fuel shortages and panic.

Experts said they worry about fuel shortages again today, although they view that as a greater risk in Europe than in the United States.

“Fuel shortages are a global problem. You’re going to see that very soon, though maybe not in the US,” said Bank of America’s Blanch.

Blanch said he thinks this risk is lower in the United States because the country remains one of the biggest oil producers on the planet and is a major exporter of energy. Europe, on the other hand, is more reliant on foreign oil and natural gas – especially from Russia.

The IEA chief warned of natural gas rationing in Europe, which is heavily dependent on Russia for gas. Blanch noted that sky-high natural gas prices have already shut down factories in Europe.

“Europe is already in natural gas rationing mode,” he said.

### **‘We have to be careful here’**

Energy experts told CNN they worry global policymakers are mismanaging the climate crisis, focusing too much on reducing supply and not enough on cutting the world’s appetite for fossil fuels.

“We’re not doing nearly enough to reduce hydrocarbon demand consistent with our climate goals,” said Bordoff.

Focusing on just one side of the equation risks not only price spikes but social unrest and turning the public off to climate action.

“We have to be careful here because if we allow the public to equate high energy prices with the energy transition, we’re doomed,” said McMonigle. “You will essentially lose public support, probably permanently.”

McMonigle urged governments to send signals to investors that not only is it okay to still invest in fossil fuels, but it’s “necessary” for the world economy and progress in the energy transition.

But even if policymakers convince investors to ramp up investment, that would take considerable time to result in more supply.

### **What could end the energy crisis**

	<p>Of course, no one can say with certainty exactly how all of this will play out. And there could be surprises that ease the supply crunch.</p> <p>For instance, a diplomatic breakthrough that ends the war in Ukraine and allows sanctions to get lifted from Russia would be a gamechanger.</p> <p>Birol said other surprises that would ease the energy crisis include an Iranian nuclear deal, a deeper economic slowdown in China or an agreement by Saudi Arabia and other OPEC producers to ramp up oil production.</p> <p>He also reiterated that governments stand ready to release further emergency stockpiles of oil. However, even the record-setting release of US emergency stockpiles had just a modest and fleeting impact on gasoline prices.</p> <p>In March, the IEA also urged governments around the world to <a href="#">consider drastic steps to slash oil demand</a>, including reducing speed limits on highways, working from home up to three days a week where possible and car-free Sundays in cities.</p> <p>And there's at least one other development that has been front-and-center lately and would ease the energy crisis: An economic <a href="#">recession</a>, or at least one that's deep enough to cause demand to collapse.</p>
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HEADLINE	<b>06/02 OPEC+ alliance boosts oil production</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/opec-alliance-boosts-oil-production-energy-prices-soar-rcna31631">https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/opec-alliance-boosts-oil-production-energy-prices-soar-rcna31631</a>
GIST	<p>LONDON — The OPEC oil cartel and allied producing countries including Russia will raise production by 648,000 barrels per day in July and August, offering modest relief for a global economy suffering from soaring energy prices and the resulting inflation.</p> <p>The decision Thursday steps up the pace by the alliance, known as OPEC+, in restoring cuts made during the worst of the pandemic recession. The group had been adding a steady 432,000 barrels per day each month to gradually restore production cuts from 2020.</p> <p>The move to increase production faster than planned comes as rising crude prices have pushed gasoline to a record high in the U.S. There are fears that elevated energy prices could slow the global economy as it emerges from the pandemic.</p> <p>OPEC, whose de facto leader is Saudi Arabia, has resisted pleas from the White House to increase oil supply to make up for production lost due to sanctions against Russia after its invasion of Ukraine.</p> <p>That, along with a European Union agreement to end most oil imports from Russia, has pushed prices higher. Gasoline and diesel prices have also been rising due to a lack of refining capacity to turn crude into motor fuel.</p> <p>In the U.S., crude prices are up 54% since the beginning of the year and gasoline prices are being pulled along.</p> <p>The U.S. saw a record high average gasoline pump price on Thursday of \$4.71 per gallon, according to AAA. The price of crude makes up about half the price of gasoline at the pump in the U.S., and prices could go even higher as the summer driving season gets under way. High gas prices for drivers are a potential factor in U.S. politics with mid-term Congressional elections approaching later this year.</p> <p>In Germany, the government has sought to soften the blow to consumer finances from energy inflation by launching deeply discounted transit passes that enable unlimited use of local trains, subways and buses for 9 euros (\$10) per month.</p>

	OPEC+ decisions have been complicated by the group's failure to meet its production targets due to underinvestment and other roadblocks in some member countries. Actual production has lagged the scheduled increases.
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HEADLINE	<b>06/02 Foreign govts targeting dissidents in US</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/world/foreign-governments-are-aggressively-targeting-dissidents-on-u-s-soil/ar-AAXZkJn">https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/world/foreign-governments-are-aggressively-targeting-dissidents-on-u-s-soil/ar-AAXZkJn</a>
GIST	<p><b>The United States has long served as a place of refuge for those fleeing repressive governments.</b> But as authoritarianism creeps across the world and social media grants dissidents a border-crossing megaphone, exiled activists are facing increasingly aggressive blowback from the countries they fled.</p> <p>In a new report released Thursday, <a href="#">pro-democracy think tank and watchdog Freedom House said it had recorded 85 new incidents of</a> “public, direct, physical incidents of transnational repression” in 2021, bringing the total recorded between the start of 2014 and the end of last year to 735.</p> <p>Even those living in the world's preeminent superpower aren't spared. Iran, China, Egypt, Russia, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia and others have targeted those in the United States, Freedom House found, and were “increasingly and more aggressively disregarding US laws to threaten, harass, surveil, stalk, and even plot to physically harm people across the country.”</p> <p>The act of transnational repression goes back at least decades: During the Cold War, the Soviet Union frequently crossed borders to <a href="#">assassinate so-called “enemies of the state.”</a> But the way some governments act now has become “brazen, even outlandish,” Freedom House's Yana Gorokhovskaia told me in a phone call.</p> <p>Autocratic governments were cooperating to promote the alarming idea, Gorokhovskaia said, that “people do not have the right to criticize those in power, no matter where they are in the world — not only at home but once they leave home as well.”</p> <p><b>Transnational repression came to Brooklyn last summer.</b> Masih Alinejad, an Iranian American journalist and activist, was the apparent target of a plot that could have seen her abducted from a waterfront neighborhood in New York City and taken out of the country, possibly by speedboat, for an uncertain fate.</p> <p>“This is not some far-fetched movie plot. We allege a group, backed by the Iranian government, conspired to kidnap a U.S.-based journalist here on our soil and forcibly return her to Iran,” FBI Assistant Director William F. Sweeney Jr. said in a statement <a href="#">announcing the plot last July</a>.</p> <p>Much of the harassment that targets dissidents on U.S. soil is less dramatic but no less powerful. Gorokhovskaia noted that the incidents counted for the report this year didn't include the subtler forms of pressure, from online abuse and hacking claims to blackmail via threats to relatives and friends still living back in their home country.</p> <p>In 2020, a New York City police officer <a href="#">originally from Tibet</a> was charged with acting as an illegal agent of the Chinese government and using his position to collect information about the Tibetan diaspora. The officer, Baimadajie Angwang, had been <a href="#">granted asylum</a> in the United States at the age of 17 after claiming he would be tortured if he returned to China.</p> <p>Freedom House interviewed a dozen people from other places now living in the United States about how the threat of transnational repression had influenced them. “When you don't feel safe in your house in the U.S., that's a disaster,” Sardar Pashaei, a former wrestler and activist from Iran, told the report's authors. “That's a shame. ... Where else on this planet should we go to feel safe?”</p>

Gorokhovskaia said: “When you talk about authoritarianism, I think often we tend to talk about it as a problem over there. This is a problem right here, and it’s happening to people who live in this country, many of whom are citizens or permanent residents. It really limits their exercise of rights that I think most of us think are ordinary and fundamental.”

**The U.S. government has taken some steps to push back against the problem.** The Justice Department has begun indicting individuals in connection with transnational repression while the FBI has been tracking the crimes and published a website that [gives victims advice and raises awareness](#).

But there is more that could be done. Freedom House points to the difficult path to lawful immigration status that exists for many immigrant communities, even those that have legitimate claims for asylum. The United States is also a diplomatic ally of some of the countries targeting dissidents abroad, such as Egypt and Saudi Arabia.

Riyadh’s attacks on foreign critics were brought to international attention by the 2018 murder of Jamal Khashoggi, a contributor to The Washington Post and a U.S. permanent resident, in Istanbul. But the United States has sought to [repair relations with Saudi Arabia in the years since](#); it never moved to personally sanction Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman.

For Saudi dissidents in the United States, this pragmatism sent a message. “MBS was not forgiven, but he was not sanctioned. He was not included,” one unnamed Saudi in the United States told Freedom House. “Right after that, things quickly changed for us. ... It seemed like there was a reaction from the Saudi government that, okay, there’s no consequences. We can do whatever we want.”

**By its nature, transnational repression is hard for any one country to fix.** International bodies like Interpol are part of the problem, with countries like Turkey, Russia and China using the crime-fighting body to issue Red Notices against dissidents and exiles, Freedom House writes, that allow them to reach people abroad.

There has been some progress. Congress passed the [Transnational Repression Accountability and Prevention \(TRAP\) Act](#) in late 2021, calling on the United States to use its influence as Interpol’s largest funder to better influence the body. In March, the governments of Australia, Britain, Canada, New Zealand and the United States called on Interpol to suspend Russian authorities’ access to systems after the invasion of Ukraine.

Freedom House calls for more to be done, with like-minded governments working together to come to an international standard of transnational repression and working with technology companies and bodies like the United Nations to limit its impact.

It won’t be easy, but the problem is unlikely to go away soon. [As Freedom House](#) and [other bodies have noted](#), authoritarianism has been spreading in recent years and democracy declining. But the flip side of growing transnational repression is that social media and online communications pose new threats to autocratic governments.

“There have always been people in exile and people who have remained engaged in the politics of their homeland from exile. But it’s undeniable that people’s voices are amplified by being online, by social media platforms,” Gorokhovskaia said. “There is this feedback loop. They can stay in touch with what’s happening at home, and they can be advocates on behalf of causes and movements at home from abroad.”

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HEADLINE	<b>06/02 Russia weapons American technology</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/02/business/economy/russia-weapons-american-technology.html">https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/02/business/economy/russia-weapons-american-technology.html</a>
GIST	WASHINGTON — With magnifying glasses, screwdrivers and a delicate touch from a soldering gun, two men from an investigative group that tracks weapons pried open Russian munitions and equipment that had been captured across Ukraine.

Over a week's visit to Ukraine last month, the investigators pulled apart every piece of advanced Russian hardware they could get their hands on, such as small laser range finders and guidance sections of cruise missiles. The researchers, who were invited by the Ukrainian security service to independently analyze advanced Russian gear, found that almost all of it included parts from companies based in the United States and the European Union: microchips, circuit boards, engines, antenna and other equipment.

"Advanced Russian weapons and communications systems have been built around Western chips," said Damien Spleeters, one of the investigators with [Conflict Armament Research](#), which identifies and tracks weapons and ammunition. He added that Russian companies had enjoyed access to an "unabated supply" of Western technology for decades.

U.S. officials have long been proud of their country's ability to supply technology and munitions to the rest of the world. But since Russia invaded Ukraine in late February, the United States has faced an unfortunate reality: The tools that Russian forces are using to wage war are often powered by American innovation.

Still, while the technology made by American and European companies has been turned against Ukraine, the situation has also given the United States and its allies an important source of leverage against Russia. The United States and dozens of countries have used export bans to [cut off shipments of advanced technology](#), hobbling Russia's ability to produce weapons to replace those that have been destroyed in the war, according to American and European officials.

On Thursday, the Biden administration announced further sanctions and restrictions on Russia and Belarus, adding 71 organizations to a government list that prevents them from buying advanced technology. The Treasury Department also announced [sanctions against a yacht-management company](#) that caters to Russian oligarchs.

While some analysts have urged caution about drawing early conclusions, saying the measures will take time to have a full effect, the Biden administration has called them a success. Since Western allies [announced extensive restrictions](#) on exports of semiconductors, computers, lasers, telecommunications equipment and other goods in February, Russia has had difficulty obtaining microchips to replenish its [supply of precision-guided munitions](#), according to one senior U.S. official, who, along with most other officials interviewed for this story, spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss matters based on intelligence.

On Tuesday, when asked if a chip shortage was crippling the Russian military, Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo, who oversees export controls, said the answer was "an unqualified yes."

"U.S. exports to Russia in the categories where we have export controls, including semiconductors, are down by over 90 percent since Feb. 24," she said. "So that is crippling."

The restrictions halt direct technological exports from the United States and dozens of partner nations to Russia. But they also go beyond traditional wartime sanctions issued by the U.S. government by placing limitations on certain high-tech goods that are manufactured anywhere in the world using American machinery, software or blueprints. That means countries that are not in the sanctions coalition with the United States and Europe must also follow the rules or potentially face their own sanctions.

Russia has stopped publishing monthly trade data since the invasion, but customs data from its major trading partners show that shipments of essential parts and components have fallen sharply. According to [data compiled](#) by Matthew C. Klein, an economics researcher who tracks the effect of the export controls, Russian imports of manufactured goods from nine major economies for which data is available were down by 51 percent in April compared with the average from September 2021 to February 2022.

The restrictions have rendered the old-school bombing runs on tank factories and shipyards of past wars unnecessary, Mr. Klein wrote. “The democracies can replicate the effect of well-targeted bombing runs with the right set of sanctions precisely because the Russian military depends on imported equipment.”

Russia is one of the world’s largest arms exporters, especially to India, but its industry relies heavily on imported inputs. In 2018, Russian sources satisfied only about half of the military-related equipment and services the country needed, such as transportation equipment, computers, optical equipment, machinery, fabricated metal and other goods, according to [data](#) from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development [compiled by Mr. Klein](#).

The remainder of equipment and services used by Russia were imported, with about a third coming from the United States, Europe, Japan, Taiwan, Australia and other partner governments that imposed sanctions together on Moscow.

U.S. officials say that in concert with a [wide variety of other sanctions](#) that ban or discourage commercial relations, the export controls have been highly effective. They have pointed to [Russian tank factories](#) that have furloughed workers and struggled with shortages of parts. The U.S. government has also received reports that the Russian military is scrambling to find parts for satellites, avionics and night vision goggles, officials say.

Technology restrictions have harmed other Russian industries as well, U.S. officials say. Equipment for the oil and gas industry has been degraded; maintenance for tractors and heavy equipment made by Caterpillar and John Deere has halted; and up to 70 percent of the commercial airplanes operated by Russian airlines, which no longer receive spare parts and maintenance from Airbus and Boeing, are grounded, officials say.

But some experts have sounded notes of caution. Michael Kofman, the director of Russia studies at CNA, a research institute in Arlington, Va., voiced skepticism about some claims that the export controls were forcing some tank factories and other defense companies in Russia to shutter.

“There’s not been much evidence to substantiate reports of problems in Russia’s defense sector,” he said. It was still too early in the war to expect meaningful supply chain problems in Russia’s defense industry, he said, and the sourcing for those early claims was unclear.

Maria Snegovaya, a visiting scholar at George Washington University who has studied sanctions on Russia, said that the lack of critical technologies and maintenance were likely to start being felt widely across Russian industry in the fall, as companies run out of parts and supplies or need upkeep on equipment. She and other analysts said that even the production of daily goods such as printer paper would be affected; Russian companies had bought the dye to turn the paper white from Western companies.

“We expect random disruptions in Russia’s production chains to manifest themselves more frequently,” Ms. Snegovaya said. “The question is: Are Russian companies able to find substitutes?”

U.S. officials say the Russian government and companies there have been looking for ways to get around the controls but have so far been largely unsuccessful. The Biden administration has [threatened to penalize any company](#) that helps Russia evade sanctions by cutting it off from access to U.S. technology.

In an interview last month, Ms. Raimondo said the United States was not seeing any systematic circumvention of the export controls by any country, including China, which [aligned itself with Russia](#) before and during the invasion of Ukraine. Companies were making independent decisions not to engage with Russia, despite the country “trying very hard to get around” the global coalition of allies that had imposed export controls, Ms. Raimondo said.

“The world knows just how very serious we are, and our allies are, about prosecuting any violation,” she said. “There will be real consequences for any companies or countries that do try to get around the export controls.”



Chinese trade data also suggest that most companies are following the restrictions. Although China has continued to buy Russian energy, Chinese exports to the country have fallen sharply since the invasion.

But Mr. Spleeters said Russia's military had used creative methods to get around past restrictions on technology imports — such as buying foreign products by way of front companies, third countries or civil distributors — and could turn to the same methods to circumvent sanctions.

Mr. Spleeters's research has [revealed efforts by some actors](#) to disguise the presence of Western technology in Russian equipment. During his trip to Kyiv, Ukraine's capital, Mr. Spleeters and his colleague unscrewed three casings holding advanced Azart encrypted radios, which provide secure communication channels for Russian forces.

They found that the first two contained microchips with parts of their manufacturing marks carefully obliterated, seemingly an effort to disguise their origin. But inside the third radio was an identical chip that had slipped by its Russian censors, showing it had been made by a company based in the United States. (Mr. Spleeters said his group would not publicize the names of the manufacturers until he had sent requests for information to each company asking how their wares ended up in the hands of the Russian military.)

Mr. Spleeters said it was not clear who had altered the markings or when the chips were delivered to Russia, though he said the attempt to mask their origin was intentional. In 2014, after the Russian invasion of Crimea, the United States [imposed restrictions](#) that were largely unilateral on shipping Russian high-technology items that could help its military abilities.

"It was neatly erased, maybe with a tool to take out just one line of markings," Mr. Spleeters said. "Someone knew exactly what they were doing."

Whether the recently imposed sanctions would result in a fundamental reduction of these kinds of supplies to Moscow was unclear, he said, given that Russia has such a large stockpile of Western technology.

His team also dissected the remnants of three different Russian surveillance drones, called Orlan, Tachyon and one previously unknown model that Ukrainian officials called Kartograf. Inside the Orlan, they found six separate parts from companies with headquarters in the United States, and one each from companies based in Switzerland and Japan. In the other two drones, they pulled parts from corporations in the United States as well as in China, Germany, the Netherlands, South Korea, Sweden and Taiwan.

As Mr. Spleeters and his colleague worked, he asked a member of the Ukrainian security service about their findings of Western parts powering Russian weapons.

"It's just business," the officer replied.

"It's a big business, and people were just selling chips and not caring or not able to know what they'd be used for eventually," Mr. Spleeters said of the Western electronics companies. "I don't think they'd be able to know who'd use them and for what purpose."

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HEADLINE	06/02 UK honors Elizabeth II, 70yrs as Queen
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/06/02/world/queen-elizabeth-jubilee">https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/06/02/world/queen-elizabeth-jubilee</a>
GIST	<p>LONDON — With regimented lines of Scots and Irish guards, throngs of Union Jack-clad onlookers and waves of aircraft streaking overhead, Queen Elizabeth II celebrated 70 years on the throne on Thursday, earning tributes from world leaders and ordinary people for a reign unmatched in British history.</p> <p>Shortly before 1 p.m., the queen stepped out onto the balcony of Buckingham Palace to greet a sea of well-wishers, stretching down the Mall. She was among four generations of the royal family, a tableau that captured both the monarchy's timeless durability and a modern family's internal stresses.</p>



Three heirs to the throne stood alongside her: her eldest son, Prince Charles; his eldest son, Prince William; and William's eldest son, Prince George. But William's younger brother, Prince Harry, was missing, having withdrawn from his royal duties and moved to Southern California with his wife, Meghan, in 2020.

Also missing was the queen's second son, Prince Andrew, who has been all but banished from public life because of his association with Jeffrey Epstein, the deceased financier and convicted sex offender. Later Thursday, Buckingham Palace said that Prince Andrew had tested positive for Covid and would miss the remainder of the celebrations.

Still, on Thursday, the royal family's dysfunction was pushed offstage by a joyful celebration of its 96-year-old matriarch, whose lifetime of service has been an anchor for Britain through any number of convulsive times.

Tributes poured in from world leaders, past and present, some of whom sounded like fanboys in their awe-struck admiration.

"You are the golden thread that binds our two countries, the proof of the unwavering friendship between our nations," said President Emmanuel Macron of France, speaking in English in a videotaped greeting.

Former President Barack Obama, who visited the queen in Buckingham Palace with his wife, Michelle, in 2011, declared, "Your life has been a gift, not just to the United Kingdom, but to the world."

In what was the emotional highlight of the festivities, the queen stepped out onto the balcony shortly after noon to inspect the troops marching beneath her. She looked alert and engaged, wearing a dusky dove blue dress with a pearl and diamanté trim cascading down the front of the coat. She then re-emerged just before 1 p.m. with other members of the royal family.

It is the first of four days of festivities — the queen's Platinum Jubilee — featuring a military parade with hundreds of Army musicians, 240 horses, a Royal Air Force flyover and a gun salute.

The ostensible purpose of all this pageantry was to celebrate the queen's birthday, which was back in April. But the show of military grandeur, known as Trooping the Color, also symbolizes Elizabeth's status as the commander in chief of the British armed forces. That link has been sacred to her since she served in the auxiliary service as a driver and truck mechanic during World War II, when she was a young princess.

The queen did not take part in the day's earlier ceremonies, a concession to her frail condition and the problems she has had walking recently. But the palace had left little doubt that she intended to turn up on the balcony, the ultimate royal photo opportunity.

She is also scheduled to lead the lighting of the Platinum Jubilee Beacon on Thursday evening from Windsor Castle, in a dual ceremony with her grandson Prince William.

Buckingham Palace sought to head off weeks of press speculation by disclosing last month that the queen would be joined at the front of the palace by a streamlined version of the royal family.

The thinner ranks at Buckingham Palace fulfill a longtime strategy by Prince Charles to reduce the number of working royals — a concession to changing times and growing public resistance to the cost of supporting the royals.

That the queen has made it to her Platinum Jubilee at all is the major story line of the week. She contracted the coronavirus in February and has talked about how the ordeal left her exhausted. She lost her husband, Prince Philip, last year, and her fragile health has forced her to cancel multiple public appearances, including a remembrance service for the war dead and the state opening of Parliament.

	That is a heavy blow for a monarch who has lived by the mantra that she had to be “seen to be believed.” But Elizabeth looked spry on Thursday, and at recent appearances at the Royal Windsor Horse Show and the Chelsea Flower Show, raising hopes that the jubilee may yet be a joyful commemoration rather than a wistful twilight.
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HEADLINE	<b>06/02 More sanctions on Russian oligarchs</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2022/jun/2/us-imposes-more-sanctions-russian-oligarchs/">https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2022/jun/2/us-imposes-more-sanctions-russian-oligarchs/</a>
GIST	<p>The Biden administration on Thursday announced a slate of new sanctions against Russia, targeting the financial networks that the country’s elites use to hide and move money for luxury purchases.</p> <p>The ramped-up punishments on Moscow for the attack on Ukraine included sanctions on individual oligarchs with ties to Russian President Vladimir Putin. The U.S. also imposed export controls on 71 companies, blocking them from obtaining technologies used by the Russian military to wage the war.</p> <p>“President Putin’s war against Ukraine is also an attack on the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity, enshrined in the UN charter,” Secretary of State Antony Blinken said in a statement. “Ukraine is fighting valiantly to defend its people and independence with unprecedented assistance from the United States and countries around the world. The United States will continue to support the people of Ukraine while promoting accountability for President Putin and those enabling Russian aggression.”</p> <p>Russian oligarchs who were sanctioned on Tuesday include God Nisanov, one of the richest men in Europe with close ties to several Russian officials. Also sanctioned is Evgeny Novitsky, another Russian elite with ties to Mr. Putin’s government.</p> <p>Others who were slapped with sanctions include Maria Zakharova, the spokesperson for the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The European Union, United Kingdom, Japan, Australia and New Zealand have already sanctioned Ms. Zakharova.</p> <p>The State Department also penalized Alexey Mordashov, one of <a href="#">Russia</a>’s wealthiest billionaires, along with his wife and two adult children. In addition, four of his companies are being designated, including Severgroup, a billion-dollar investment firm with holdings in engineering, tourism, media and finance.</p>
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HEADLINE	<b>06/03 Deadly secret: electronic warfare in war</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://apnews.com/article/russia-ukraine-kyiv-technology-90d760f01105b9aaf1886427dbfba917">https://apnews.com/article/russia-ukraine-kyiv-technology-90d760f01105b9aaf1886427dbfba917</a>
GIST	<p>KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — On <a href="#">Ukraine’s battlefields</a>, the simple act of powering up a cellphone can beckon a rain of deathly skyfall. Artillery radar and remote controls for unmanned aerial vehicles may also invite fiery shrapnel showers.</p> <p>This is electronic warfare, a critical but largely invisible aspect of Russia’s war against Ukraine. Military commanders largely shun discussing it, fearing they’ll jeopardize operations by revealing secrets.</p> <p>Electronic warfare technology targets communications, navigation and guidance systems to locate, blind and deceive the enemy and direct lethal blows. It is used against artillery, fighter jets, cruise missiles, drones and more. Militaries also use it to protect their forces.</p> <p>It’s an area where Russia was thought to have a clear advantage going into the war. Yet, for reasons not entirely clear, its much-touted electronic warfare prowess was barely seen in the war’s early stages in <a href="#">the chaotic failure to seize the Ukrainian capital of Kyiv</a>.</p> <p>It has become far more of a factor in fierce fighting in eastern Ukraine, where shorter, easier-to-defend supply lines let Russia move electronic warfare gear closer to the battlefield.</p>

“They are jamming everything their systems can reach,” said an official of [Aerorozvidka](#), a reconnaissance team of Ukrainian unmanned aerial vehicle tinkerers, who spoke on the condition of anonymity because of safety concerns. “We can’t say they dominate, but they hinder us greatly.”

A Ukrainian intelligence official called the Russian threat “pretty severe” when it comes to disrupting reconnaissance efforts and commanders’ communications with troops. Russian jamming of GPS receivers on drones that Ukraine uses to locate the enemy and direct artillery fire is particularly intense “on the line of contact,” he said.

Ukraine has scored some successes in countering Russia’s electronic warfare efforts. It has captured important pieces of hardware — a significant intelligence coup — and destroyed at least [two multi-vehicle mobile electronic warfare units](#).

Its own electronic warfare capability is hard to assess. Analysts say it has markedly improved since 2014, when Russia seized Crimea and instigated a separatist revolt in eastern Ukraine. But there are setbacks. Last week, Russia claimed it destroyed a Ukrainian electronic intelligence center in the southeastern town of Dniprovsk. The claim could not be independently confirmed, and Ukrainian officials did not respond to a request for comment.

Ukraine has also made effective use of technology and intelligence from the United States and other NATO members. Such information helped Ukraine [sink the battle cruiser Moskva](#). Allied satellites and surveillance aircraft help from nearby skies, as does billionaire Elon Musk’s [Starlink satellite communications network](#).

Electronic war has three basic elements: probe, attack and protect. First, intelligence is gathered by locating enemy electronic signals. On attack, “white noise” jamming disables and degrades enemy systems, including radio and cellphone communications, air defense and artillery radars. Then there is spoofing, which confuses and deceives. When it works, munitions miss their targets.

“Operating on a modern battlefield without data is really hard,” said retired [Col. Laurie Buckhout](#), a former U.S. Army electronic warfare chief. Jamming “can blind and deafen an aircraft very quickly and very dangerously, especially if you lose GPS and radar and you’re a jet flying at 600 miles an hour.”

All of which explains the secrecy around electronic warfare.

“It is an incredibly classified field because it is highly dependent on evolving, bleeding-edge technologies where gains can be copied and erased very quickly,” said [James Stidham](#), a communications security expert who has consulted for the U.S. State and Homeland Security departments.

Ukraine learned hard lessons about electronic warfare in 2014 and 2015, when Russia overwhelmed its forces with it. The Russians knocked drones out of the sky and disabled warheads, [penetrated cellphone networks for psychological ops](#) and zeroed in on Ukrainian armor.

One Ukrainian officer told Christian Brose, an aide to the late U.S. Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., how Russian info warriors tricked a commander into returning a wireless call from his mother. When he did, they geolocated him in mid-call and killed him with precision rockets, Brose wrote in the book “The Kill Chain.”

The U.S. also experienced Russia’s electronic warfare in action in Syria, where the adversaries have backed opposing sides in the civil war. In 2018, U.S. Special Operations chief [Gen. Raymond Thomas](#) described how U.S. pilots’ communications were [regularly “knocked down”](#) in Syria in the “most aggressive” electronic warfare environment on the planet. [Russia’s advanced systems are designed](#) to blind U.S. Airborne Warning and Control Systems, or AWACS, aircraft — the eyes and ears of battlefield commanders — as well as cruise missiles and spy satellites.

In the current war, electronic warfare has become a furious theater of contention.

Aerorozvidka has modified camera-equipped drones to pinpoint enemy positions and drop mortars and grenades. Hacking is also used to poison or disable enemy electronics and collect intelligence.

Ukrainian officials say their electronic warfare capabilities have improved radically since 2015. They include the use of encrypted U.S and Turkish communications gear for a tactical edge. Ukraine has advanced so much it exports some of its technology.

Russia has engaged in GPS jamming in areas from Finland to the Black Sea, said [Lt. Col. Tyson Wetzel](#), an Air Force fellow at the Atlantic Council. One regional Finnish carrier, Transaviabaltica, had to cancel flights on one route for a week as a result. Russian jamming has also disrupted Ukrainian television broadcasting, said Frank Backes, an executive with California-based Kratos Defense, which has satellite ground stations in the region.

Yet in the war's early days, Russia's use of electronic warfare was less effective and extensive than anticipated. That may have contributed to its failure to destroy enough radar and anti-aircraft units to gain air superiority.

Russia's defense ministry did not respond to a request for comment for this article.

Some analysts believe Russian commanders held back units fearing the units would be captured. At least two were seized. One was a Krasukha-4, which a U.S. Army database says is designed to jam satellite signals as well as surveillance radar and radar-guided weapons from more than 100 miles (160 kilometers) away. The other: the more advanced Borisoglebsk-2, which can jam drone guidance systems and radio-controlled land mines.

Russia may have also limited the use of electronic warfare early in the conflict because of concerns that ill-trained or poorly motivated technicians might not operate it properly.

"What we're learning now is that the Russians eventually turned it off because it was interfering with their own communications so much," said retired Lt. Gen. Ben Hodges, a former U.S. Army commander for Europe.

The communications problems were evident with many Russian troops talking on insecure open radio channels, easily monitored by outsiders.

It's unclear how much of an edge Russia's electronic assets may now offer. Ukraine's forces are now more concentrated than early in the war, which could make them easier to target.

Much depends on whether Russia's battalion tactical groups "are configured in reality as they are on paper," said James Rands, of the Jane's military intelligence think tank. Each group, comprised of roughly 1,000 troops, is supposed to have an electronic warfare unit. The Pentagon says 110 such groups are in Ukraine.

The Kremlin also claims to have more than 1,000 small, versatile Orlan-10 unmanned aerial vehicles it uses for reconnaissance, targeting, jamming and cellphone interception.

Russia has lost about 50 of its Orlan-10s in the war, but "whatever they lost could be a small portion of what's flying," said researcher Samuel Bendett, of the Center for Naval Analyses think tank.

Ukraine's relative UAV strength is unclear, but Ukrainians have adapted such technologies as software-defined radio and 3D printing to stay nimble.

The U.S. and Britain also supply jamming gear, but how much it helps is unclear. Neither country has offered details. The ability of both sides to disable the other's drones is crucial with the artillery they scout now so decisive in battles.

	<p>Musk's Starlink is a proven asset. Its more than 2,200 low-orbiting satellites provide broadband internet to more than 150,000 Ukrainian ground stations. Severing those connections is a challenge for Russia. It is far more difficult to jam low-earth orbiting satellites than geostationary ones.</p> <p>Musk has won plaudits from the Pentagon for at least temporarily defeating Russian jamming of Ukrainian satellite uplinks with a quick software fix. But he has warned Ukrainians to keep those terminals powered down when possible — they are vulnerable to geolocation — and recently worried on Twitter about redoubled Russian interference efforts.</p> <p>"I'm sure that the Russians are getting smarter about that now," said Wetzel, the Air Force lieutenant colonel.</p>
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HEADLINE	<b>06/02 Airfares surge 50% amid travel redux</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.cbsnews.com/news/airfare-ticket-prices-up-50-percent-as-domestic-international-travel-rebounds/">https://www.cbsnews.com/news/airfare-ticket-prices-up-50-percent-as-domestic-international-travel-rebounds/</a>
GIST	<p>More Americans are taking to the skies this summer than there are available plane seats, driving up ticket prices as airlines grapple with <a href="#">surging fuel costs</a>, <a href="#">staffing challenges</a> and <a href="#">smaller fleets</a>.</p> <p>Airfares at American Airlines, Delta Air Lines and United Airlines — the three largest domestic carriers — <a href="#">shot up nearly 50%</a> for the week ending May 23 compared to a year ago, according to an analysis by Cowen, a financial services firm. Cowen tracked nearly 300 routes across four different fare categories for the carriers using data from New York-based Harrell Associates, which tracks airline pricing trends.</p> <p>A <a href="#">report</a> from Mastercard Economics Institute shows consumers are booking domestic and international travel at a rate not seen since before the pandemic. By the end of April, flight bookings were up 25% compared to pre-pandemic levels, with the report's authors noting an "unprecedented surge" in international trips, based on anonymized spending data from <a href="#">Mastercard cardholders</a>.</p> <p><b>"Capacity is strained"</b></p> <p>Another challenge for airlines: managing rising labor costs. Industry wages and salaries as a percentage of sales have risen to 22%, according to Mastercard. Landing fees, maintenance and repair costs, and other operating expenses are also elevated.</p> <p>But rising airfares are "all based on the supply of airline seats and demand," said Robert Mann, owner of airline industry consulting firm R.W. Mann &amp; Company. "There is some cost pressure, but that usually comes out of the airlines' margins,"</p> <p>It's also not unusual for ticket prices to soar roughly 30% in the summer months, compared to the rest of the year, according to Mann.</p> <p>Airlines continue to recover from the impact of the pandemic, when travel all but vanished, as well as work through operational kinks including pre-departure COVID-19 testing requirements for passengers heading to other countries.</p> <p>"Some of the biggest long-haul international planes are still not fully deployed and others aren't yet available," Mann said. "So capacity is strained and there is a surplus in demand, and that's why we have rising prices. It is simply the market responding to an excess of demand over supply."</p>
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HEADLINE	<b>06/02 Boosted getting more Covid infections?</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.cbsnews.com/news/covid-19-vaccine-boosters-infection-rate/">https://www.cbsnews.com/news/covid-19-vaccine-boosters-infection-rate/</a>

As [COVID-19 cases](#) began to accelerate again this spring, federal data suggests the rate of breakthrough COVID infections in April was worse in boosted Americans compared to unboosted Americans — though rates of deaths and [hospitalizations](#) remained the lowest among the boosted.

The new data do not mean [booster shots](#) are somehow increasing the risk. [Ongoing studies](#) continue to provide strong evidence of additional protection offered by booster shots against infection, severe disease, and death.

Instead, the shift underscores the [growing complexity](#) of measuring vaccine effectiveness at this stage of the pandemic. It comes as officials are weighing key decisions on booster shots and pandemic surveillance, including whether to continue using the "crude case rates" at all.

It also serves to illustrate a tricky reality facing health authorities amid the latest COVID-19 wave: even many boosted Americans are vulnerable to catching and spreading the virus, at a time when officials are wary of reimposing pandemic measures like mask requirements.

"During this Omicron wave, we're seeing an increased number of mild infections — at-home type of infections, the inconvenient, having a cold, being off work, not great but not the end of the world. And that's because these Omicron variants are able to break through antibody protection and cause these mild infections," John Moore, a professor of microbiology and immunology at Weill Cornell Medical College, told CBS News.

"So, one of the dynamics here is that people feel, after vaccination and boosting, that they're more protected than they actually are, so they increase their risks," he said. "That, I think, is the major driver of these statistics."

On the CDC's [dashboard](#), which is updated monthly, the agency acknowledges several "factors likely affect crude case rates by vaccination and booster dose status, making interpretation of recent trends difficult."

The CDC had rolled out the page several months ago, amid demands for better federal tracking of breakthrough cases. It has now grown to encompass data from immunization records and positive COVID-19 tests from 30 health departments across the country

For the week of April 23, it said the rate of [COVID-19 infections](#) among boosted Americans was 119 cases per 100,000 people. That was more than double the rate of infections in those who were vaccinated but unboosted, but a fraction of the levels among unvaccinated Americans.

That could be because there is a "higher prevalence of previous infection" right now among those who are unvaccinated and unboosted, the CDC said. More boosted Americans may now have abandoned "prevention behaviors" like wearing masks, leading to an uptick.

Some boosted Americans might be more likely to seek out a lab test for COVID-19, as opposed to relying on [over-the-counter rapid tests](#) that go largely unreported to health authorities.

"Home testing has become, I think, the single biggest concern in developed countries that can interfere with our measurements," CDC's Ruth Link-Gelles told [a conference](#) hosted by the National Foundation for Infectious Diseases last month.

Some federal officials have floated the possibility of adopting a survey — similar to those relied on by authorities in the United Kingdom — as an alternative way to track a "ground truth" in COVID-19 cases, though plans to stand up such a system do not appear imminent.

"Moving beyond this crisis, I do think the future is in random sampling. And that's an area that we're looking at closely," Caitlin Rivers, a top official on the agency's disease forecasting team, told an event hosted [by the National Academies](#) last week.



Meanwhile, federal officials are also preparing for key decisions on future COVID-19 vaccine shots, which might up the odds that additional shots might be able to fend off infections from the latest variants.

In the short term, CDC Director Dr. Rochelle Walensky recently [told reporters](#) that her agency was in talks with the Food and Drug Administration about extending the option for [second boosters](#) to more adults. Right now, only adults 50 and over and some immunocompromised Americans are eligible to receive [a fourth dose](#).

#### **Next generation of vaccines and boosters**

Further down the road, a panel of the Food and Drug Administration's outside vaccine advisers is [scheduled](#) to meet later this month to weigh data from new booster candidates produced by Pfizer and BioNTech as well as Moderna.

BioNTech executives told investors [last month](#) that regulators had asked to see data for both shots specifically adapted for the Omicron variant in addition to "bivalent vaccines," which target a blend of mutations.

Those new vaccines would take about three months to manufacture, the White House's top COVID-19 official Dr. Ashish Jha [told reporters](#).

"It's a little bit of a challenge here because we don't know how much further the virus will evolve over the next few months, but we have no choice because if we want to produce the hundreds of millions of doses that need to be available for a booster campaign, we have to start at risk in the early July timeframe or even somewhat sooner," Dr. Peter Marks, the FDA's top vaccines official, said at a recent [webinar](#) hosted by the American Medical Association.

Marks said that bivalent shots seemed likely to be favored, given the "wiggle room" it could offer for unforeseen variants beyond Omicron.

Vaccines that might offer even better "mucosal immunity" – actually fighting off the virus where it first infects the respiratory system – are still a ways off, Marks cautioned.

"I think that we are in a transition time and I, again, will speak openly to the fact that 2022 to 2023 is a year where we have to plan for trying to minimize the effect of COVID-19 with the tools that we have in hand," Marks said at a [recent event](#) with the National Foundation for Infectious Diseases.

"I do believe that, potentially by the 2023-2024 season, we'll start to see second generation SARS-CoV-2 vaccines," he added later.

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HEADLINE	<b>06/02 HHS to audit FDA over baby formula crisis</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://abcnews.go.com/Health/fda-audited-baby-formula-crisis/story?id=85129272">https://abcnews.go.com/Health/fda-audited-baby-formula-crisis/story?id=85129272</a>
GIST	<p>The Health and Human Services' Office of Inspector General is launching an audit into how the Food and Drug Administration responded leading up to the massive February recall of baby formula and closure of Abbott Nutrition's Sturgis plant.</p> <p>OIG's review, first reported by ABC News, will examine whether the FDA upheld its duty "to safeguard the nation's food supply, including infant formula and ensure all ingredients are safe" and if FDA regulators followed proper recall protocol once a deadly bacteria had been detected inside the plant.</p> <p>The Sturgis, Michigan, plant was shut down in mid-February after contamination issues inside had been linked to four infants being hospitalized with a rare but serious bacterial infection, two of whom ultimately died.</p>



The review of the FDA's actions marks an extraordinary and uncommon move from the watchdog agency.

Its advent also punctuates loud, frustrated calls from the American public and lawmakers alike for accountability on the ongoing infant formula shortage – a now-national supply crisis which was exacerbated by Abbott's contamination issues and ultimate shutdown.

This is not first time Abbott's quality control has come under questioning.

Federal regulators warned months ago of potential problems at a manufacturing plant for baby formula, according to documents and a public [timeline of the events](#).

The FDA found sanitation issues at Abbott's Sturgis plant in September 2021, saying it "did not maintain a building used in the manufacture, processing, packing or holding of infant formula in a clean and sanitary condition," according to an inspection report.

By Feb. 1, FDA had collected samples at the plant confirming the presence of cronobacter, according to an inspection report. Abbott maintains there is no conclusive evidence that its products contributed to the death of two infants.

But it wasn't until mid-February when Abbott, the largest infant formula manufacturer in the country, issued a voluntary recall.

The drastic move quickly slashed a significant share of the U.S. formula supply – a market which had already begun to show signs of strain from pandemic supply chain disruptions.

There is also a 34-page whistleblower report from a former employee of Abbott Laboratories, which alleges a "litany of violations" and contamination issues at Abbott's Sturgis facility.

But that complaint remained in limbo for months after it was sent to the FDA in October 2021. Agency leaders recently testified before members of Congress that they didn't receive that report last fall "due to an isolated failure in FDA's mailroom, likely due to COVID-19 staffing issues."

The complaint was not seen by top officials until mid-February, FDA's deputy commissioner for food policy and response, Frank Yiannas said, roughly four months after it had landed at the agency.

As [families still desperately scramble](#) to find the food they need for their children, serious questions loom large about whether a breakdown in the chain of command and communication at the agency abetted a sluggish response to the growing problem. Some are asking whether more could have been done by the government to address sanitation issues and operational issues – and possibly prevent a nationwide shortage.

Responding to a request for comment on the newly launched IG audit of FDA's actions leading up to Abbott's recall, an FDA spokesperson said the agency intends to "fully cooperate" with the review.

The agency takes its responsibility to safeguard American food, including infant formula, "very seriously," the spokesperson added.

It is that very responsibility, and whether FDA fulfilled it, which HHS-OIG's review will now examine.

"The FDA intends to fully cooperate with the HHS OIG review," the FDA spokesperson tells ABC in a statement. "If HHS OIG identifies any actionable items and provides the agency with any recommendations, the FDA will review expeditiously to determine the best course of action. In the interim, the FDA has initiated its own review of the actions around the investigation into Abbott's Sturgis, Michigan, as well as the associated response so that we can make improvements to our programs, processes, and decision making."

	"We take our responsibility to ensure the safety of the foods we eat, including infant formula, very seriously," the spokesperson said. "Companies are expected to meet our rigorous standards, which include ensuring the consistent quality and safety of the products they produce."
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HEADLINE	<b>06/03 US, allies prepare for NKorea nuclear test</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://abcnews.go.com/Health/wireStory/envoy-us-allies-preparing-korean-nuclear-test-85153374">https://abcnews.go.com/Health/wireStory/envoy-us-allies-preparing-korean-nuclear-test-85153374</a>
GIST	<p>SEOUL, South Korea -- President Joe Biden's special envoy for North Korea said Friday the United States is "preparing for all contingencies" in close coordination with its South Korean and Japanese allies as it monitors North Korean arrangements for a possible nuclear test explosion that outside officials say could be imminent.</p> <p>South Korean and U.S. intelligence officials have said they detected North Korean efforts to prepare its northeastern testing ground for another nuclear test, which would be its seventh since 2006 and the first since September 2017, when it claimed to have detonated a thermonuclear bomb to fit on its intercontinental ballistic missiles.</p> <p>Sung Kim, the U.S. special representative for North Korea, was in Seoul for a trilateral meeting with his South Korean and Japanese counterparts to discuss the growing threat posed by North Korea's nuclear weapons and missiles programs.</p> <p>"The U.S. assesses that the DPRK is preparing at its Punggye-ri test site for what would be its seventh nuclear test. This assessment is consistent with the DPRK's own recent public statements," said Kim, using the initials of North Korea's formal name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.</p> <p>Aside from coordinating with Seoul and Tokyo over contingency planning, Washington is also prepared to make "both short- and longer-term adjustments to our military posture as appropriate and responding to any DPRK provocation and as necessary to strengthen both defense and deterrence to protect our allies in the region," Kim said.</p> <p>Funakoshi Takehiro, Japan's director-general for Asian and Oceanian Affairs, said the North's spate of ballistic tests this year and possible nuclear test preparations underscore the need for a more robust international response and lamented the United Nations Security Council's inaction over the North's recent tests.</p> <p>Kim Gunn, South Korea's representative at the nuclear envoy, said North Korea's nuclear weapons and missile development would only strengthen the security cooperation between the United States and its Asian allies and deepen the North's isolation and economic woes.</p> <p>"That is why it is so important to steer North Korea back towards the paths of dialogue and diplomacy," he said.</p> <p>Nuclear negotiations between Washington and Pyongyang have stalled since 2019 over disagreements in exchanging the release of crippling U.S.-led sanctions against North Korea and the North's disarmament steps.</p> <p>North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has expanded his ballistic missile program amid the diplomatic pause and a nuclear test would escalate his brinkmanship aimed at cementing the North's status as a nuclear power and negotiating economic and security concessions from a position of strength.</p> <p>North Korea has already conducted missile tests 17 different times in 2022, including its first ICBM demonstrations in nearly five years, exploiting a favorable environment to push forward weapons development as the U.N. Security Council remains divided over Russia's war on Ukraine.</p>

Russia and China last week vetoed a U.S.-sponsored resolution that would have imposed additional sanctions on North Korea over its latest ballistic tests on May 25, which South Korea's military said involved an ICBM flown on medium-range trajectory and two short-range weapons. Those tests came as Biden wrapped up his trip to South Korea and Japan, where he reaffirmed the U.S. commitment to defend both allies in the face of the North's nuclear threat.

Linda Thomas-Greenfield, the U.S. ambassador to the U.N., said Washington will still push for additional sanctions if North Korea conducts a new nuclear test.

Kim Jong Un's pressure campaign is unlikely to be impeded by a deadly coronavirus outbreak in his largely unvaccinated autocracy.

Dr. Mike Ryan, the World Health Organization's emergencies chief, said Wednesday that the U.N. health agency assumes the virus situation in North Korea is "getting worse, not better," considering the lack of public health tools, despite Pyongyang's recent claims that COVID-19 is slowing there.

While North Korea has so far ignored U.S. and South Korean offers of vaccines and other COVID-19 supplies, the country appears to be receiving help from China, its main ally and economic lifeline.

GAVI, the nonprofit that runs the U.N.-backed COVAX distribution program, said it understands that North Korea has accepted an offer of vaccines from China and has started to administer doses. It isn't immediately clear how many doses of which vaccines the North received or how the country was rolling them out.

Some experts say North Korea, with its supplies limited, would prioritize inoculating certain groups based on economic needs, including workers and soldiers involved in cross-border trade or major construction projects Kim Jong Un considers crucial to his rule.

The North had previously shunned millions of doses offered by COVAX, possibly because of international monitoring requirements attached to those shots.

"COVAX has allocated doses to DPRK in several prior allocation rounds, and has always been ready to support Pyongyang should it request our assistance, but so far we have received no formal requests for COVID-19 vaccine support," GAVI said Friday in an email to The Associated Press.

Sung Kim, the U.S. envoy, said Washington would continue to support humanitarian efforts to supply the North with COVID-19-related relief.

North Korea says it has so far found 3.9 million people with feverish symptoms, but health officials have confirmed only a handful of cases as COVID-19, likely because of shortages in testing supplies.

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HEADLINE	<b>06/02 UN: Myanmar violence displaces 1M+</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/report-million-displaced-myanmar-amid-violence-85129146">https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/report-million-displaced-myanmar-amid-violence-85129146</a>
GIST	<p>BANGKOK -- The United Nations' humanitarian relief agency says the number of people displaced within strife-torn Myanmar has for the first time exceeded 1 million, with well over half the total losing their homes after a military takeover last year.</p> <p>The U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs says in a report that an already critical situation is being exacerbated by ongoing fighting between the military government and its opponents, the increasing prices of essential commodities, and the coming of monsoon season, while funding for its relief efforts is severely inadequate. Its report covers the situation up to May 26.</p> <p>The military has hindered or denied independent access to areas not under its control, hampering aid efforts.</p>

Myanmar's army in February last year seized power from the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi, triggering widespread peaceful protests. When those were put down with lethal force by the army and police, nonviolent opposition turned into armed resistance, and the country slipped into what some U.N. experts characterize as a civil war.

OCHA says that fighting has recently escalated.

"The impact on civilians is worsening daily with frequent indiscriminate attacks and incidents involving explosive hazards, including landmines and explosive remnants of war," the report says.

It says that more than 694,300 people have become displaced from their homes since the army takeover, with thousands being uprooted a second or third time, and an estimated 346,000 people were displaced by fighting before last year's takeover — mostly in frontier regions populated by ethnic minority groups who have been struggling for greater autonomy for decades.

The report also says about 40,200 people have fled to neighboring countries since the takeover and more than 12,700 "civilian properties," including houses, churches, monasteries and schools are estimated to have been destroyed.

As of the end of the first quarter of this year, humanitarian assistance reached 2.6 million people in Myanmar, or 41% of the 6.2 million people targeted, OCHA says. The country's total population is over 55 million.

But it warns this year's Myanmar Humanitarian Response Plan is only 10% funded so far, falling short by \$740 million.

An official of the military government's Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement said Wednesday at a news conference in Myanmar's capital Naypyitaw that the government distributed humanitarian aid to more than 130,000 displaced people from May 2021 through May 27 this year.

The official, whose testimony was broadcast but who was not identified by name, said 1,255 houses and five religious buildings were burned or destroyed in fighting between the army and local resistance militias, and consequently received government aid for rebuilding.

U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi said last month that the number of people worldwide forced to flee conflict, violence, human rights violations and persecution has crossed the milestone of 100 million for the first time on record. That's more than 1% of the global population and comprises refugees and asylum-seekers as well as people displaced inside their own countries by conflict.

Violence and conflicts in countries including Ethiopia, Burkina Faso, Myanmar, Nigeria, Afghanistan and the Democratic Republic of Congo had driven the total to almost 90 million by the end of last year. The war in Ukraine pushed the number past the 100 million mark.

The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, an independent Geneva-based non-governmental organization, said 53.2 million people were displaced within their countries as a result of conflict and violence as of Dec. 31.

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HEADLINE	06/02 Iran: another death Quds force officer
SOURCE	<a href="https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/iran-reports-death-revolutionary-guard-colonel-85154368">https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/iran-reports-death-revolutionary-guard-colonel-85154368</a>
GIST	TEHRAN, Iran -- Iran reported the death of another colonel of the elite Quds force of its Revolutionary Guards on Friday, the second in two weeks from the unit which oversees Iran's military operations abroad.

	<p>Quoting an unknown official, the early morning report by the official IRNA news agency said Col. Ali Esmailzadeh died during an “incident in his residence” days ago in city of Karaj, some 35 kilometers (19 miles) northwest of the capital Tehran.</p> <p>It did not elaborate but denied reports that the colonel was assassinated.</p> <p>Other news channels close to the Guard said Esmailzadeh fell from his rooftop or balcony. In May two unidentified gunmen on a motorbike shot Col. Hassan Sayyad Khodaei five times in a car in front of his residence in Tehran.</p> <p>Iran blamed his slaying on the United States and its allies, including Israel. Iran traditionally blames Israel for such targeted killings, including those on nuclear scientists over the past years.</p>
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<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>06/02 China, Australia in dueling Pacific tours</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/china-australias-dueling-pacific-tours-make-final-stops-85155047">https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/china-australias-dueling-pacific-tours-make-final-stops-85155047</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>WELLINGTON, New Zealand -- The foreign ministers of Australia and China were both making their final stops Friday on what has become an island-hopping diplomatic duel in the South Pacific.</p> <p>Australia’s Foreign Minister Penny Wong arrived in Tonga where she met with Prime Minister Hu’akavameiliku and other officials including King Tupou VI. Her visit came just three days after China’s Foreign Minister Wang Yi held similar meetings in Tonga.</p> <p>Wong and the officials talked about climate change and rebuilding efforts after the devastating earthquake and tsunami that hit in January. Also on the agenda was the contentious issue of regional security.</p> <p>“We are not a government or a country that wants to come in and tell you what you should do,” Wong said at a news conference in the capital, Nuku’alofa.</p> <p>She said Australia considered itself part of the Pacific family.</p> <p>“We want regional security to be dealt with, to be the responsibility of the Pacific family,” Wong said. “And we will continue to engage with our friends, our partners in the region.”</p> <p>Hu’akavameiliku said Tonga was honored that Wong had decided to visit just two weeks after taking office, following an election in Australia.</p> <p>“This is a clear sign of the Australian government’s strong commitment to strengthening our bilateral relations and engagement with our region,” the prime minister said.</p> <p>Meanwhile, Wang met in Papua New Guinea with Prime Minister James Marape and other officials ahead of a scheduled flight Friday afternoon to East Timor, the final stop on his eight-nation tour of the region and the first outside of the South Pacific. Wang is due to leave from East Timor on Saturday.</p> <p>Wang had hoped to ink an ambitious multilateral deal with 10 South Pacific nations this week covering everything from security to fisheries. He couldn’t find consensus on that deal but has been notching up smaller wins by signing bilateral agreements with many of the countries he’s been visiting.</p> <p>The diplomatic push by China, especially around Pacific security, has caused deep concern among some of the island nations as well as farther afield in Canberra and Washington. Since news of the proposed deal emerged, Wong has made two trips to the Pacific to shore up support for Australia.</p>
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<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>06/02 Behind Turkey’s Syria incursion threats</b>
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SOURCE	<a href="https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/explainer-turkeys-syria-incursion-threats-85154741">https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/explainer-turkeys-syria-incursion-threats-85154741</a>
GIST	<p>BEIRUT -- In northern Syria, residents are bracing for a new fight. With the world's attention focused on the war in Ukraine, Turkey's leader says he's planning a major military operation to push back Syrian Kurdish fighters and create a long sought-after buffer zone in the border area.</p> <p>Tensions are high. Hardly a day passes by without an exchange of fire and shelling between the U.S.-backed Syrian Kurdish fighters, and Turkish forces and Turkey-backed Syrian opposition gunmen.</p> <p>Analysts say Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan is taking advantage of the war in Ukraine to push his own goals in neighboring Syria — even using Turkey's ability as a NATO member to veto alliance membership by Finland and Sweden as potential leverage.</p> <p>But a major incursion by Ankara comes with risks and complications, threatening to upset Turkey's ties with both the United States and Russia. It also risks creating a new wave of displacement in a war-ravaged region where the Islamic State group still lurks in the shadows.</p> <p>Here's a look at the situation on the ground and some of the key issues:</p> <p><b>TURKISH AMBITIONS</b></p> <p>Erdogan last month outlined plans to resume Turkish efforts to create a 30-kilometer (19 mile) deep buffer zone in Syria, along its southern border through a cross-border incursion against U.S.-allied Syrian Kurdish fighters. Erdogan wanted to create that zone in 2019 but a military operation fell short of achieving it.</p> <p>"We'll come down on them suddenly one night. And we must," Erdogan said, without giving a specific timeline.</p> <p>Since 2016, Turkey has launched three major operations inside Syria, targeting Syria's main Kurdish militia — the People's Protection Units or YPG — which Turkey considers to be a terrorist organization and an extension of the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party, or PKK. The PKK has for decades waged an insurgency within Turkey against the government in Ankara.</p> <p>The YPG, however, forms the backbone of U.S.-led forces in the fight against Islamic State militants and has been a proven top U.S. ally in Syria.</p> <p>Turkey, through the three previous military operations in Syria, already has control over a large chunk of Syrian territory, including the towns of Afrin, Tel Abyad and Jarablus. Ankara plans to build thousands of housing units in those areas, to ensure what it says will be the "voluntary return" of 1 million out of the 3.7 million Syrian refugees currently in Turkey.</p> <p>Erdogan said Wednesday that Turkish troops now aim to take new areas, including the towns of Tel Rifaat and Manbij, which sits on a major intersection of roads on Syria's west-east highway known as the M4. Turkey says the Syrian Kurdish fighters use Tel Rifaat as a base to attack areas held by Turkey-backed Syrian opposition fighters.</p> <p>There have been also reports that Turkish troops might enter the strategic border town of Kobani, where the U.S. military and Kurdish fighters first united to defeat IS in 2015. The town holds powerful symbolism for Syrian Kurds and their ambitions of self-rule in this part of Syria.</p> <p><b>WHY NOW?</b></p> <p>Analysts say Erdogan likely sees a confluence of circumstances, both international and domestic, that make an operation in Syria timely. The Russians are preoccupied with the war in Ukraine, and the Americans need Erdogan to drop his objections to the expansion of NATO to include Finland and Sweden.</p>



“They (Turks) sense an opportunity to try and get concessions from the West,” said Aaron Stein, head of research at the Foreign Policy Research Institute in Philadelphia.

A Syria offensive could also be used to rally Turkish nationalist voters at a time when their economy is in decline, with inflation running at 73.5%. Turkey is set to hold presidential and parliamentary elections next year, and previous incursions into Syria to drive out the YPG have bolstered support for Erdogan in past balloting.

So far, there are no signs of mobilization pointing to an imminent invasion, although the Turkish military could be called upon fairly quickly. Syrian Kurdish fighters, however, say they are taking Turkey’s latest threat seriously and have been preparing for a possible attack.

They warn that an incursion would affect their ongoing fight against IS and their ability to protect prisons in northern Syria where thousands of extremists, many of them foreign nationals, have been locked up since IS was defeated territorially three years ago.

#### TURKEY’S US AND RUSSIA TIES

A large-scale military operation carries high risks and is likely to anger both the U.S and Russia, who also have a military presence in northern Syria.

Turkey and Russia support rival sides in Syria’s 11-year conflict but have been closely coordinating in the country’s north. While Russia has not officially commented, it has in recent days sent fighter jets and helicopter gunships to a base close to the border with Turkey, according to Syrian opposition activists.

As one of Damascus' closest allies, Russia's role in Syria has been paramount in turning the tide of the conflict in Syria — which started amid Arab Spring uprisings in 2011 — in favor of Syrian President Bashar Assad. The Syrian opposition fighters were relegated to an enclave in the northwest and Turkey's sphere of influence.

But with Moscow focused on Ukraine, it's unlikely Vladimir Putin will stand in Erdogan's way over what is essentially just a strip of land along Turkey's southern border.

Washington has made clear its opposition to a Turkish military incursion, saying it would put at risk hard-won gains in the campaign against IS.

“We recognize Turkey’s legitimate security concerns on its border. But again, we are concerned that any new offensive would further undermine regional stability,” said State Department spokesman Ned Price.

Stein, the analyst, said any operation would be complicated because of Russian presence in both potential hotspots, Kobani and Tel Rifaat.

Whether an operation takes place boils down to the question on how far Erdogan is prepared to go in Syria, particularly in and around the Kobani area — and whether he would be unchallenged by Moscow and Washington.

“How much risk does he want to take? The evidence that we have is that he takes a lot of risk,” Stein said.

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HEADLINE	06/03 Turkey data: annual inflation rate: 73.5%
SOURCE	<a href="https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/data-puts-turkeys-annual-inflation-735-24-year-85155356">https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/data-puts-turkeys-annual-inflation-735-24-year-85155356</a>
GIST	ANKARA, Turkey -- Annual inflation in Turkey hit 73.5% in May, the highest rate since 1998, according to official data released Friday as a cost-of-living crisis in the country deepens.



	<p>The Turkish Statistical Institute said the rate represented an increase of almost 70% from the month before. Consumer prices were up nearly 3% from April, the institute reported.</p> <p>While many countries are seeing rising consumer prices, critics blame Turkey's problems on President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's economic policies.</p> <p>The Turkish leader insists that high borrowing costs cause inflation - a position that contradicts established economic thinking - and advocates lowering interest rates to boost growth and exports.</p> <p>Turkey's central bank has cut rates by 5 percentage points since September, to 14% before pausing them in January. The Turkish lira lost 44% of its value against the U.S. dollar last year.</p> <p>Russia's invasion of Ukraine, which led to a surge in gas, oil and grain prices, has compounded the situation in import-reliant Turkey.</p> <p>The sharpest increases in annual prices were in the <a href="#">transportation</a> sector, at 107.6%, followed by <a href="#">food</a> and non-alcoholic drinks prices at 91.6%, according to the statistical institute's data.</p>
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HEADLINE	<b>06/02 NOAA: average size Gulf 'dead zone'</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://abcnews.go.com/US/wireStory/noaa-forecasts-average-dead-zone-off-louisiana-texas-85142648">https://abcnews.go.com/US/wireStory/noaa-forecasts-average-dead-zone-off-louisiana-texas-85142648</a>
GIST	<p>NEW ORLEANS -- Decades of work haven't shrunk the oxygen-depleted "dead zone" that forms each year in the Gulf of Mexico off Louisiana and Texas.</p> <p>The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration is forecasting that this year's will be about the 35-year average. That's nearly triple the goal for reducing the area with too little oxygen for marine animals to survive.</p> <p>Combining models developed by five universities resulted in a forecast of about 5,364 square miles (13,893 square kilometers), NOAA said in a news release. That's a hair lower than the five-year measured average of 5,380 square miles (13,934 square kilometers) and about 15% smaller than last year's measurement.</p> <p>In 2001, a federal-state task force set a long-term goal of reducing the dead zone, or hypoxic area, to 1,900 square miles (4,920 square kilometers) — about 35% of the current average.</p> <p>"The action plan to reduce the size of the Gulf of Mexico dead zone was established over 20 years ago, yet this year's forecast is comparable to the 35-year average zone," said the University of Michigan's Don Scavia, who leads one of several research teams working with NOAA.</p> <p>"Clearly, the federal and state agencies and Congress continue to prioritize industrial agriculture over water quality," Scavia, professor emeritus at the School for Environment and Sustainability, said in a news release on the university's website.</p> <p>The Gulf dead zone is largely created by urban and agricultural runoff and discharges of nitrogen and phosphorus to the Mississippi River, which drains 41% of the continental United States. In the Gulf of Mexico, the nutrients feed an overgrowth of algae, which die and sink to the bottom, using up oxygen from the ocean floor up as they decompose.</p> <p>Fish, shrimp and crabs can swim away. Animals that are slower or fixed to the bottom cannot.</p> <p>"The Gulf dead zone remains the largest hypoxic zone in United States waters, and we want to gain insights into its causes and impacts," said Nicole LeBoeuf, assistant administrator of NOAA's National Ocean Service. "The modeling we do here is an important part of NOAA's goal to protect, restore and manage the use of coastal and ocean resources through ecosystem-based management."</p>

The problem is by no means unique to the United States.

“The number of dead zones throughout the world has been increasing in the last several decades and currently totals over 500,” Louisiana State University scientists Nancy Rabalais, who has studied the phenomenon since 1985, and Eugene Turner wrote in a separate release Thursday.

In 1999, researchers knew of 61 hypoxic areas around the world.

The one that stretches along most of Louisiana’s coast and into Texas waters “is the second largest human-caused coastal hypoxic area in the global ocean,” Rabalais and Turner wrote.

Models used by NOAA were developed by the agency and scientists at LSU, Michigan, William & Mary’s Virginia Institute of Marine Science, North Carolina State University, Dalhousie University and the U.S. Geological Survey, which provides Mississippi River nutrient data.

Some of the universities also release their own forecasts. LSU’s, which sees nitrogen levels in May as the main driver for the area’s size in July, forecast its size this year at 5,881 square miles (15,233 square kilometers).

The Interagency Mississippi River and Gulf of Mexico Hypoxia Task Force uses NOAA’s hypoxia forecast models and USGS nutrient monitoring to set nutrient reduction targets across the Mississippi watershed states.

Officials noted that the bipartisan infrastructure law signed in November 2021 includes \$60 million over five years for the Environmental Protection Agency to support nutrient reduction strategies in the watershed.

“The Hypoxia Task Force has a transformational opportunity to further control nutrient loads in the Mississippi River Basin and reduce the size of the hypoxic zone using Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funding,” said John Goodin, director of EPA’s Office of Wetlands, Oceans and Watersheds. “This annual forecast is a key metric for assessing the progress the Hypoxia Task Force is making.”

To confirm the size of the hypoxic zone and refine the forecast models, NOAA supports a monitoring survey each summer.

Because hurricanes and tropical storms roil the water and mix in oxygen, one in the two weeks before the cruise could significantly reduce the dead zone.

"If a storm does occur, then the size of the zone is predicted to be 56% of the predicted size without the storm," or about 3,294 square miles (8,530 square kilometers), Rabalais and Turner wrote in their forecast.

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HEADLINE	<b>06/02 Tropical storm watches for Florida, Cuba</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://abcnews.go.com/US/wireStory/storm-warnings-posted-florida-system-moves-gulf-85147064">https://abcnews.go.com/US/wireStory/storm-warnings-posted-florida-system-moves-gulf-85147064</a>
GIST	<p>ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. -- Tropical storm watches were posted Thursday for Florida, Cuba and the Bahamas as the system that battered Mexico moves to the east.</p> <p>The National Hurricane Center in Miami said the storm once known as Agatha in the Pacific Ocean will be known as Alex in the Atlantic Ocean basin.</p> <p>In Florida, the tropical storm watch extended from Longboat Key on the Gulf Coast across the southern Florida peninsula, including Lake Okeechobee, which is always a danger for flooding. The low-lying Florida Keys were included in the storm watch.</p>

The Cuban government issued a tropical storm watch for the provinces of Matanzas, Mayabeque, La Habana, Artemisa, Pinar del Rio and the Isle of Youth, according to the U.S. National Weather Service.

The watch area also included the northwestern Bahamas.

The Atlantic hurricane season officially began Tuesday. This is an unusually early start to the storm season but not unprecedented for Florida.

The National Hurricane Center predicts that rainfall up to 10 inches (25 centimeters) is possible in places in South Florida from this storm, which is not expected to produce huge winds or major storm surge. Still, flooding is likely and winds could be somewhat strong.

The Hurricane Center said maximum sustained winds from the system as of Thursday afternoon were about 35 mph (55 kph) with higher gusts. It's expected to become a tropical storm sometime Friday, which means higher winds but not at hurricane levels.

"Heavy rains will begin to affect South Florida and the Keys Friday and continue through Saturday," the Hurricane Center said in an online post. Also predicted is storm surge and flooding, the severity of which depends on the timing of tides.

As a Pacific storm, Hurricane Agatha caused flooding and mudslides that killed at least 11 people and left 20 missing in Mexico, officials said. It caused rivers to overflow their banks and swept away people in homes, while other victims were buried under mud and rocks.

This storm is now headed for Florida.

Agatha made history as the strongest hurricane ever recorded to come ashore in May during the eastern Pacific hurricane season since 1949. Climate scientists say tropical systems will become more powerful and destructive because of global warming.

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## Cyber Awareness

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HEADLINE	06/02 HHS alerts to ongoing Emotet threat
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.scmagazine.com/analysis/malware/hhs-alerts-to-ongoing-emotet-threat-to-the-healthcare-sector">https://www.scmagazine.com/analysis/malware/hhs-alerts-to-ongoing-emotet-threat-to-the-healthcare-sector</a>
GIST	<p>Trojans are the most common malware impacting computer systems in the healthcare sector, the most common of which is Emotet, according to a Department of Health and Human Services Cybersecurity <a href="#">Coordination Center alert</a> containing mitigation strategies for the sector.</p> <p>Although a global law enforcement effort took down the Emotet botnet in January 2021 using a “timed wiper,” it reemerged less than a year later, using improved commands and dropper capabilities. The Emotet actors have also started to use Cobalt Strike, as its actors work to rebuild the botnet.</p> <p>The malware <a href="#">first emerged as a banking trojan</a> in 2014 and is one of the longest lasting cybercrime operations. Emotet became one of the most dominant malware variants in 2019.</p> <p>In the past, Emotet has claimed a number of healthcare victims, including the University of California San Francisco, which <a href="#">paid the attackers</a> \$1.14 million in June 2020 to return the data they stole from its school of medicine.</p> <p>In December 2020, prior to the takedown, one of the last Emotet campaigns was observed sending more than 100,000 emails in a day and leveraged new evasion tactics. The actors behind the threat notoriously used tactics that prey on fears surrounding the pandemic.</p>

Emotet is well known for its evasive tactics, with its actors constantly modifying the variant to ensure the most effective payload. When active, it's consistently one of the largest senders of malicious emails. For the phishing campaigns, HC3 warns "all that's needed to begin an Emotet attack" is for a user to click "enable content" within a malicious document to enable the macros.

Its previous botnet campaign and infrastructure was used as a primary gateway on a global scale, with Emotet actors selling access to the victims' networks on the darkweb to other cybercriminals. The malware is primarily sent using a fully automated phishing process with malicious Word documents attached to the emails.

The latest [Emotet research](#) from Proofpoint shows the actors appear to be testing new tactics against Microsoft OneDrive URLs. The researchers observed a low volume of malicious emails distributing Emotet via OneDrive URLs. The tactics were a departure from typical Emotet behavior and suggests the group is testing new attack techniques.

Currently, reports and HC3 researchers have found Emotet is the most dominant trojan, especially against healthcare targets. The ongoing campaigns have primarily targeted Japan, but North America remains a frequent target.

Given the potential impact to the sector, HC3 is urging provider organizations to review the report and attack specifics to bolster defenses. The analysis contains infection patterns, downloader formats, payloads, and operational insights, as well as links to government resources to effective security strategies against the ongoing threat.

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HEADLINE	<b>06/02 Exiled group claims Tehran hacking</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.securityweek.com/exiled-iran-group-claims-tehran-hacking-attack">https://www.securityweek.com/exiled-iran-group-claims-tehran-hacking-attack</a>
GIST	<p>An exiled Iranian opposition group Thursday claimed a hacking attack which it said temporarily took control of dozens of websites run by Tehran's municipality and thousands of the capital's surveillance cameras.</p> <p>Iranian state media said earlier that the internal computer system of the municipality of Tehran was targeted in a "deliberate" shutdown Thursday in the latest apparent cyber attack in the country.</p> <p>The People's Mujahedin of Iran (MEK), which is outlawed in Iran, said in a statement that their operatives inside the country had carried out the attack "in a major operation, planned months in advance."</p> <p>It said the hacking attack on the Tehran municipality websites saw images appear of MEK leader Massoud Rajavi, who has not been seen in public for years, and his wife Maryam Rajavi, as well as slogans against supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.</p> <p>SMS messages to almost 600,000 Tehran residents carrying similar slogans had also been sent in the operation, it added.</p> <p>The operation also saw MEK supporters take control of more than 5,000 security cameras around the city, including ones positioned close to the office of the supreme leader and the tomb of revolutionary founder Ruhollah Khomeini, the statement added.</p> <p>"This vast network is one of the principal instruments of surveillance and suppression used by the clerical regime," it said.</p> <p>"In recent years, these cameras have been used to identify and detain protesters taking part in popular uprisings and protests," it added.</p> <p>- 'Offensive measures' -</p>

The MEK, which in January claimed a major hack against state-run TV channels, said "this is the latest in a series of offensive measures undertaken by the resistance units against the regime's agencies and ministries."

It published on social media channels images of Tehran that the group claimed were taken by security cameras in the capital during the operation.

AFP could not independently verify the claim.

The action also comes at a time of protests in Iran over price rises, which have been intensified by anger over a deadly building collapse last month in the southwestern city of Abadan.

Quoting a statement by the Tehran Municipality Information and Communications Technology Organization, state news agency IRNA said that the main municipality website was targeted at midday, with the webpage briefly replaced with the "posting of an insulting image".

"A deliberate disruption of the internal page of the internal system of Tehran municipality... put this system out of reach of colleagues for a few minutes," IRNA reported.

Throughout Thursday, municipality websites including the main portal tehran.ir, as well as the "My Tehran" application offering municipal services to citizens, were not available while experts examined them.

In October, a cyber attack [brought all fuel distribution stations](#) in the country to a halt, resulting in long lines at petrol stations.

An Iranian general [said Israel and the United States](#) were likely to have been behind the fuel service cyber attack.

Since 2010, when Iran's nuclear programme was hit by the Stuxnet computer virus, Iran and Israel have regularly accused each other of cyberattacks.

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HEADLINE	<b>06/02 Chinese hackers cyber-espionage malware</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.bleepingcomputer.com/news/security/chinese-luoyu-hackers-deploy-cyber-espionage-malware-via-app-updates/">https://www.bleepingcomputer.com/news/security/chinese-luoyu-hackers-deploy-cyber-espionage-malware-via-app-updates/</a>
GIST	<p>A Chinese-speaking hacking group known as LuoYu is infecting victims WinDealer information stealer malware deployed by switching legitimate app updates with malicious payloads in man-on-the-side attacks.</p> <p>To do that, the threat actors actively monitor their targets' network traffic for app update requests linked to popular Asian apps such as QQ, WeChat, and WangWang and replace them with WinDealer installers.</p> <p>Once deployed, WinDealer helps the attackers search for and siphon large amounts of data from compromised Windows systems, install backdoors to maintain persistence, manipulate files, scan for other devices on the network, and run arbitrary commands.</p> <p>Instead of using the common hard-coded command-and-control (C2) server info, WinDealer will connect to a random ChinaNet (AS4134) IP address from the Xizang and Guizhou provinces out of a pool of 48,000 IP addresses, according to security researchers at Kaspersky who observed this new delivery method.</p> <p>Since controlling the entirety of these IP ranges is likely impossible, explanations of how LuoYu is capable of this include the use of compromised routers "on the route to (or inside) AS4134," the use of ISP-level law enforcement tools, or "signals intelligence methods unknown to the general public."</p>

LuoYu has switched to abusing the automatic update mechanism of their victims' apps after previously pushing malware in easier to pull-off watering-hole attacks where they would use compromised local news sites as infection vectors.

"Man-on-the-side-attacks are extremely destructive, as the only condition needed to attack a device is for it to be connected to the internet. Even if the attack fails the first time, attackers can repeat the process over and over again until they succeed," explained Kaspersky senior security researcher Suguru Ishimaru.

"No matter how the attack has been carried out, the only way for potential victims to defend themselves is to remain extremely vigilant and have robust security procedures, such as regular antivirus scans, analysis of outbound network traffic and extensive logging to detect anomalies."

Targeting Korean and Japanese organizations since at least 2014, LuoYu is also known for attacking foreign diplomatic organizations in China, the academic community, and organizations from multiple industry sectors, including defense and telecommunications.

Kaspersky's Global Research and Analysis Team (GReAT) has also spotted occasional infections in other countries such as Germany, Austria, the United States, the Czech Republic, Russia, and India.

Recently, LuoYu has also started going after companies in East Asia and branches located within China.

Besides targeting Windows devices using WinDealer, this lesser-known hacking group has previously been observed attacking macOS, Linux, and Android devices with Demsty (ReverseWindow) and SpyDealer malware.

"LuoYu is an extremely sophisticated threat actor able to leverage functionality available only to the most mature attackers. We can only speculate as to how they were able to develop such capabilities," Ishimaru added.

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HEADLINE	06/02 Ransomware gang hack corporate websites
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.bleepingcomputer.com/news/security/ransomware-gang-now-hacks-corporate-websites-to-show-ransom-notes/">https://www.bleepingcomputer.com/news/security/ransomware-gang-now-hacks-corporate-websites-to-show-ransom-notes/</a>
GIST	<p>A ransomware gang is taking extortion to a new level by publicly hacking corporate websites to publicly display ransom notes.</p> <p>This new extortion strategy is being conducted by <a href="#">Industrial Spy</a>, a data extortion gang that recently began using ransomware as part of their attacks.</p> <p>As part of their attacks, <a href="#">Industrial Spy</a> will breach networks, steal data, and <a href="#">deploy ransomware on devices</a>. The threat actors then threaten to sell the stolen data on their Tor marketplace if a ransom is not paid.</p> <p><b>Defacing websites as part of data extortion</b></p> <p>Today, Industrial Spy began selling data they claim was stolen from a French company named SATT Sud-Est for \$500,000.</p> <p>As first noticed by security researcher <a href="#">MalwareHunterTeam</a>, this attack stands out because the threat actors also hacked the company's website to display a message warning that 200GB had been stolen and would soon be up for sale if the victim did not pay a ransom.</p> <p>When ransomware gangs extort a victim, they typically give them a short window, usually a few weeks, to negotiate and pay a ransom before they start leaking data.</p>



	<p>During this negotiation process, the threat actors promise to keep the attack secret, provide a decryption key, and delete all data if a ransom is paid.</p> <p>After this period, the threat actors will use various methods to increase pressure, including DDoS attacks on corporate websites, emailing customers and business partners, and calling executives with threats.</p> <p>These tactics are all done privately or with minimal exposure on their data leak sites, which are usually only visited by cybersecurity researchers and the media.</p> <p>However, this is the first time we have seen a ransomware gang defacing a website to very publicly display a ransom note.</p> <p>While this tactic is outside the norm, it allows the ransomware gang to apply further pressure on a victim, as it pushes the attack into the spotlight where customers and business partners can more easily see it.</p> <p>It is not believed, though, that this new tactic will see widespread use as web servers are not typically hosted on corporate networks but rather with hosting providers.</p> <p>Therefore, threat actors would need to find a vulnerability in the website or gain access to credentials when they steal data from internal networks.</p> <p>BleepingComputer has contacted SATT Sud-Est to confirm if the attack is legitimate but did not receive a response.</p>
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HEADLINE	<b>06/02 Conti targets Intel chipset firmware</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.darkreading.com/threat-intelligence/intel-chipset-firmware-actively-targeted-conti-group">https://www.darkreading.com/threat-intelligence/intel-chipset-firmware-actively-targeted-conti-group</a>
GIST	<p>Leaked communications from within the Conti threat group reveal the Moscow-backed cybercrime group has honed its firmware attack skills and is actively targeting Intel Management Engine (ME), a microcontroller inside many iterations of the modern Intel chipset, according to a new report.</p> <p>The analysis, from Eclipsium, notes that Intel chipsets aren't being <a href="#">targeted by Conti</a> because they have vulnerable code, but rather the group assumes firmware patching is spotty at best. In addition, firmware attacks can evade most security tools, the analysts added.</p> <p>"This can leave some of the most powerful and privileged code on a device susceptible to attack," the report detailing the <a href="#">Conti firmware attacks</a> said. "The recent <a href="#">Conti leaks</a> mark a critical phase in the rapidly evolving role of firmware in modern attacks."</p>
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HEADLINE	<b>06/02 Sanctions force Evil Corp tactics change</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.darkreading.com/attacks-breaches/us-sanctions-force-evil-corp-to-change-tactics">https://www.darkreading.com/attacks-breaches/us-sanctions-force-evil-corp-to-change-tactics</a>
GIST	<p>Sanctions that the US government imposed on Russia-based crimeware gang Evil Corp in 2019 appear to have forced the threat actor to change tactics to remain in the cybercrime business.</p> <p><a href="#">New research</a> into the group's activity by Mandiant shows that after the sanctions were put in place — after the group caused more than \$100 million in losses to banks and other financial institutions by stealing sensitive information — Evil Corp switched to using ransomware in an apparent effort to obscure attribution.</p> <p>Moving on from using Dridex, its own exclusive (and easily fingerprinted) malware, <a href="#">Evil Corp</a> actors have been observed deploying ransomware families used by multiple threat groups, such as Hades, WastedLocker, PhoenixLocker, and most recently LockBit, a ransomware-as-a-service option.</p>



US regulations prohibit organizations — including ransomware victims and negotiators — from conducting any kind of financial transactions with organizations and entities on the US Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) sanctions list.

"[US] sanctions have had a direct impact on threat actor operations, particularly as at least some companies involved in ransomware remediation activities, such as negotiation, refuse to facilitate payments to known sanctioned entities," Mandiant says in its report. "This can ultimately reduce threat actors' ability to be paid by victims, which is the primary driver of ransomware operations."

That means US ransomware victims need to pay closer attention to whom they are dealing with, says Jeremy Kennelly, senior manager of financial crime analysis at Mandiant Threat Intelligence.

"When dealing with a ransomware intrusion, the particular malware being deployed, or the branding on ransom notes, or shaming websites may be insufficient to determine whether the beneficiary of payments has affiliations with Evil Corp, a sanctioned entity," he says.

### **Sanctions Crunch**

[OFAC sanctioned Evil Corp](#) and two members associated with the group for stealing more than \$100 million from financial institutions in 40 countries using credentials harvested with the Dridex malware tool.

Around the time the sanctions were imposed, Evil Corp had begun renting out Dridex for use by affiliate gangs. It also had begun making its own foray into the ransomware space, initially with BitPaymer ransomware and later with DopplesPaymer and WastedLocker in 2019.

In 2020 Evil Corp. targeted more than two-dozen US organizations with ransomware, including several Fortune 500 companies in a massive WastedLocker campaign. Months after the sanctions went into effect, the threat actor stopped using WastedLocker and soon after switched to a variety of other tools, such as Hades and most recently LockBit — a ransomware-as-a service tool that gives the threat actor an opportunity to blend in with other actors.

### **UNC2165: Another Evolution of Evil Corp.**

Mandiant says since 2019 it has investigated multiple LockBit ransomware intrusions carried out by a group that the vendor is currently tracking as UNC2165. According to Mandiant, UNC2165 has a lot of overlap with Evil Corp and is most likely an actor closely affiliated with it. For instance, in all the intrusions that Mandiant investigated, UNC2165 obtained access to the victim network via UNC1543, a financially motivated threat group that distributes FakeUpdates, a multistage JavaScript dropper for distributing malware. FakeUpdates was also the infection chain for deploying Dridex that later resulted in BitPaymer and DopplesPaymer ransomware infections.

Similarly, the Hades ransomware family that Mandiant observed UNC2165 deploying had multiple code similarities to other ransomware tools tied to Evil Corp. Several of the command-and-control servers that UNC2165 has been observed using have also been linked to Evil Corp infrastructure, Mandiant says.

"The operational relationship between UNC2165 and the broader Evil Corp group is not fully understood," Kennelly says. "Mandiant has observed UNC2165 deploying Hades ransomware and operating Hades-related infrastructure. Furthermore, multiple public reports related to the deployment of other ransomware families commonly attributed to Evil Corp have involved use of infrastructure Mandiant attributes to UNC2165."

Kennelly says it's unclear what impact Mandiant's report tying an Evil Corp-related actor to LockBit will have in the ransomware space.

"The impact this disclosure will have on ransomware negotiators is difficult to predict," he says. "LockBit may quickly move to distance themselves from affiliates with ties to Evil Corp, or deny the allegations wholesale," he says.

	Furthermore, UNC2165 has shifted their operations multiple times over the past years, and this may ultimately lead to them to again adopt an updated toolkit if ransomware negotiators halt work on LockBit cases, he notes.
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HEADLINE	<b>06/03 Microsoft blocks Polonium attacks at Israel</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://securityaffairs.co/wordpress/131902/hacking/microsoft-blocked-polonium-attacks.html?web_view=true">https://securityaffairs.co/wordpress/131902/hacking/microsoft-blocked-polonium-attacks.html?web_view=true</a>
GIST	<p>Microsoft announced to have blocked a series of attacks targeting Israeli organizations that have been conducted by a previously unknown Lebanon-based hacking group tracked as POLONIUM. POLONIUM has targeted or compromised more than 20 Israeli organizations and one intergovernmental organization with operations in Lebanon over the past three months. Since February, the attacks targeted organizations in critical manufacturing, IT, and Israel's defense industry.</p> <p>Threat actors were observed abusing OneDrive, for this reason, the IT giant has suspended more than 20 malicious OneDrive applications created by POLONIUM actors, notified affected organizations, and deployed a series of security intelligence updates that will quarantine malicious tools developed by the attackers.</p> <p>MSTIC researchers believe that the attackers were coordinated with other actors affiliated with Iran's Ministry of Intelligence and Security (<a href="#">MOIS</a>), based on victim overlap and TTPs. This circumstance is confirmed by revelations that emerged in the last couple of years that the Iranian government is using cyber mercenaries for its operations.</p> <p><i>"This actor has deployed unique tools that abuse legitimate cloud services for command and control (C2) across most of their victims." reads the <a href="#">analysis</a> published by Microsoft. "POLONIUM was observed creating and using legitimate OneDrive accounts, then utilizing those accounts as C2 to execute part of their attack operation."</i></p> <p>MSTIC has observed POLONIUM active on or targeting multiple organizations that were previously compromised by Iran-linked <a href="#">MuddyWater</a> APT (aka <a href="#">MERCURY</a>).</p> <p>POLONIUM notified affected organizations and deployed a series of security intelligence updates that will quarantine tools developed by POLONIUM operators.</p> <p>The IT giant pointed out that threat actors did not exploit any vulnerabilities on the OneDrive platform.</p> <p>The threat actors employed in the attacks multiple custom implants, such as CreepyDrive and CreepySnail, that utilize cloud services for command and control as well as data exfiltration.</p> <p>The analysis of the attack revealed that approximately 80% of the observed victims were using Fortinet appliances, a circumstance that suggests the attackers may have compromised their network by exploiting the <a href="#">CVE-2018-13379</a> vulnerability.</p> <p>In at least one case, POLONIUM conducted a supply chain attack through the compromise of a cloud service provider based in Israel and likely used this access to compromise downstream customers of the service provider.</p> <p>Microsoft provides indicators of compromise (IoCs) for these attacks and recommends customers verify that Microsoft Defender Antivirus uses the latest security intelligence updates (1.365.40.0 or later), use multi-factor authentication (MFA) for all remote connectivity, and review all authentication activity for remote access infrastructure (VPNs).</p>
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HEADLINE	<b>06/02 Conti leaks: interest in firmware attacks</b>
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SOURCE	<a href="https://thehackernews.com/2022/06/conti-leaks-reveal-ransomware-gangs.html?&amp;web_view=true">https://thehackernews.com/2022/06/conti-leaks-reveal-ransomware-gangs.html?&amp;web_view=true</a>
GIST	<p>An analysis of <a href="#">leaked chats</a> from the notorious <a href="#">Conti ransomware group</a> earlier this year has revealed that the syndicate has been working on a set of firmware attack techniques that could offer a path to accessing privileged code on compromised devices.</p> <p>"Control over firmware gives attackers virtually unmatched powers both to directly cause damage and to enable other long-term strategic goals," firmware and hardware security firm Eclypsiu <a href="#">said</a> in a report shared with The Hacker News.</p> <p>"Such level of access would allow an adversary to cause irreparable damage to a system or to establish ongoing persistence that is virtually invisible to the operating system."</p> <p>Specifically, this includes attacks aimed at embedded microcontrollers such as the Intel <a href="#">Management Engine (ME)</a>, a privileged component that's part of the company's processor chipsets and which can completely bypass the operating system.</p> <p>It's worth noting that the reason for this evolving focus is not because there are new security vulnerabilities in Intel chipsets, but rather it banks on the possibility that "organizations do not update their chipset firmware with the same regularity that they do their software or even the UEFI/BIOS system firmware."</p> <p>The conversations among the Conti members, which leaked after the group pledged its support to Russia in the latter's invasion of Ukraine, have shed light on the syndicate's attempts to mine for vulnerabilities related to ME firmware and BIOS write protection.</p> <p>This entailed finding undocumented commands and vulnerabilities in the ME interface, achieving code execution in the ME to access and rewrite the SPI flash memory, and dropping System Management Mode (<a href="#">SMM</a>)-level implants, which could be leveraged to even modify the kernel.</p> <p>The research ultimately manifested in the form of a proof-of-concept (PoC) code in June 2021 that can gain SMM code execution by gaining control over the ME after obtaining initial access to the host by means of traditional vectors like phishing, malware, or a supply chain compromise, the leaked chats show.</p> <p>"By shifting focus to Intel ME as well as targeting devices in which the BIOS is write protected, attackers could easily find far more available target devices," the researchers said.</p> <p>That's not all. Control over the firmware could also be exploited to gain long-term persistence, evade security solutions, and cause irreparable system damage, enabling the threat actor to mount <a href="#">destructive attacks</a> as witnessed during the Russo-Ukrainian war.</p> <p>"The Conti leaks exposed a strategic shift that moves firmware attacks even further away from the prying eyes of traditional security tools," the researchers said.</p> <p>"The shift to ME firmware gives attackers a far larger pool of potential victims to attack, and a new avenue to reaching the most privileged code and execution modes available on modern systems."</p>
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HEADLINE	<b>06/02 Offensive cyber operations to aid Ukraine</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.theregister.com/2022/06/02/nakasone_us_hacking_russia/?&amp;web_view=true">https://www.theregister.com/2022/06/02/nakasone_us_hacking_russia/?&amp;web_view=true</a>
GIST	<p>America's military conducted offensive cyber operations to support Ukraine in its response to Russia's illegal invasion, US Cyber Command chief General Paul Nakasone has said.</p> <p>"We've conducted a series of operations across the full spectrum; offensive, defensive, [and] information operations," General Nakasone <a href="#">told</a> Sky News in an interview that aired Wednesday.</p>

Nakasone, who also serves as director of the NSA, didn't provide specific details about the offensive operations, though he said they were lawful and complied with US policy.

"My job is to provide a series of options to the secretary of defense and the President, and so that's what I do," he said.

White House press spokesperson Karine Jean-Pierre [doubled down](#) on the message, saying: "We don't negotiate our security assistance packages to Ukraine. We are doing exactly what the President said he would do ... to provide security assistance that is above and beyond."

Tom Kellermann, head of cybersecurity strategy at VMware, called the move "historic."

"Since 2013, the Russians have waged an insurgency in American cyberspace and our retaliation and disruption has been muted," Kellermann, who is also a global fellow for cyber policy at the Wilson Center, told *The Register*.

"The paradigm has changed as Russia must play defense now," he continued. "The US brings to bear the formidable capabilities of Cyber Command against rogue nation states. Cyberspace is a new domain for warfare."

Tenable CEO Amit Yoran added: "That the US has engaged in offensive cyber operations should be of no surprise to anyone. There are very few countries around the globe today who do not use such measures. The fact that these operations are acknowledged in a public way is unusual."

Last month, the US and the European Union officially blamed Russia for a series of a destructive data-wiping malware infections in Ukrainian government and private-sector networks that began in January, and continued after Russian troops invaded Ukraine the following month.

At the time, the governments also said they would "take steps" to defend against and respond to Kremlin-orchestrated attacks.

And while President Joe Biden has [indicated](#) the US would respond with kinetic force to a major cyberattack against the West, General Nakasone's comments are the first confirmation of US-sanctioned hacking against Russia.

Nakasone did, in May, [reveal](#) that US Cyber Command conducted nine "hunt forward" operations last year, sending teams to different countries including Ukraine to help them improve their defensive security posture and hunt for cyberthreats.

These missions provide "security for our nation in cyberspace," Nakasone said during a Summit on Modern Conflict and Emerging Threats at Vanderbilt University. "It provides an inoculation of these threats, and it provides a partnership with a nation that has asked us for assistance."

In fact, the agency's first hunt-forward exercise sent a Cyber Command team to Ukraine in 2018 with the goal to "understand what our adversaries are doing, being able to capture that and then being able to share it," Nakasone said. That adversary, although he didn't name names, is presumably Russia.

When asked by Sky News journalist Alex Martin, formerly of this parish, about the risk of Russian attacks targeting the US, General Nakasone said: "We remain vigilant every single day. Every single day. I think about it all the time."

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HEADLINE	06/02 Top 10 Android banking Trojans
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.bleepingcomputer.com/news/security/top-10-android-banking-trojans-target-apps-with-1-billion-downloads/?&amp;web_view=true">https://www.bleepingcomputer.com/news/security/top-10-android-banking-trojans-target-apps-with-1-billion-downloads/?&amp;web_view=true</a>

The ten most prolific Android mobile banking trojans target 639 financial applications that collectively have over one billion downloads on the Google Play Store.

Mobile banking trojans hide behind seemingly benign apps like productivity tools and games and commonly sneak into the Google Play Store, Android's official app store.

Once they infect a device, they overlay login pages on top of legitimate banking and finance apps to steal account credentials, monitor notifications to snatch OTPs, and even carry out on-device financial fraud by abusing Accessibility services to perform actions as the user.

According to [a report by Zimperium](#) that gives an overview of the Android ecosystem in the first quarter of 2021, each of these trojans has assumed a unique spot in the market by how many organizations they target as well as functionality that differentiate them from the rest.

This finding is very worrying, as according to 2021 surveys, three out of four respondents in the U.S. use banking apps to perform their daily banking activities, providing a massive pool of targets for these trojans.

### **The most targeted**

United States tops the list of the most targeted countries having 121 targeted apps. The United Kingdom follows with 55 apps, Italy with 43, Turkey with 34, Australia counts 33, and France has 31.

The trojan that targets the most applications is Teabot, covering 410 out of 639 of those tracked, while Exobot also targets a sizable pool of 324 applications.

The targeted application with the most downloads is PhonePe, which is very popular in India, having 100 million downloads from the Play Store.

Binance, the popular cryptocurrency exchange app, counts 50M downloads. Cash App, a US and UK-covering mobile payment service, also has 50 million installations via the Play Store. Both of these are also targeted by several banking trojans, even if they don't offer conventional banking services.

The most widely targeted application is BBVA, a global online banking portal with tens of millions of downloads. This app is targeted by seven out of the ten most active banking trojans.

### **Most prolific trojans**

The most prolific banking trojans in the first quarter of this year, according to Zimperium, are the following.

- [BianLian](#) – Targets Binance, BBVA, and a range of Turkish apps. A new version of the trojan discovered in April 2022 features photoTAN bypassing, which is considered a strong authentication method in online banking.
- **Cabassous** – Targets Barclays, CommBank, Halifax, Lloyds, and Santander. Uses domain generation algorithm (DGA) to evade detection and takedowns.
- **Coper** – Targets BBVA, Caixa Bank, CommBank, and Santander. It actively monitors device battery optimization "allowlist" and modifies it to exempt itself from restrictions.
- [EventBot](#) – Targets Barclays, Intensa, BancoPosta, and various other Italian apps. It hides as Microsoft Word or Adobe Flash, and can download new malware modules from remote sources.
- [Exobot](#) – Targets PayPal, Binance, Cash App, Barclays, BBVA, and CaixaBank. It's very small and light because it uses shared system libraries and fetches overlays from the C2 only when needed.
- [FluBot](#) – Targeted BBVA, Caixa, Santander, and various other Spanish apps. The botnet trojan was notorious for its rapid distribution using SMS and contact lists of compromised devices.
- [Medusa](#) – Targets BBVA, CaixaBank, Ziraat, and a range of Turkish bank apps. It can perform on-device fraud by abusing the accessibility service to act as a normal user on the victim's behalf.
- [Sharkbot](#) – Targets Binance, BBVA, and Coinbase. It features a rich set of detection evasion and anti-deletion capabilities, as well as strong C2 communication encryption.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Teabot</a> – Targets PhonePe, Binance, Barclays, Crypto.com, Postepay, Bank of America, Capital One, Citi Mobile, and Coinbase. It features a special keylogger for each app, and loads it when the user launches it.</li> <li>• <a href="#">Xenomorph</a> – Targets BBVA and various EU-based bank apps. It can also serve as a dropper to fetch additional malware on the compromised device.</li> </ul> <p>As it becomes clear from the above, each of the ten most prolific banking trojans maintains its own relatively narrow targeting scope, so the ecosystem is balanced and the operatives can pick the tool that matches their target audience.</p> <p>To protect from all these threats, keep your device up to date, only install apps from the Google Play Store, check user reviews, visit the developer’s site, and keep the number of installed apps on your device at a minimum.</p>
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HEADLINE	<b>06/02 Clipminer botnet operators rake in \$1.7M</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.securityweek.com/report-clipminer-botnet-operators-rake-17-million?web_view=true">https://www.securityweek.com/report-clipminer-botnet-operators-rake-17-million?web_view=true</a>
GIST	<p>Cybercriminals operating the Clipminer botnet have raked in at least \$1.7 million in illicit gains to date, according to an estimate by security researchers at Symantec.</p> <p>Spreading via trojanized cracked or pirated software, the Clipminer trojan shows similarities with the cryptomining trojan KryptoCibule, suggesting that it could be either a copycat or an evolution of the latter.</p> <p><a href="#">According to Symantec</a>, Clipminer was first spotted around January 2021, shortly after KryptoCibule was detailed in an ESET research project, suggesting a possible rebranding of the same threat.</p> <p>Once it has compromised a machine, the malware can abuse its resources to mine for cryptocurrency, but is also capable of modifying clipboard contents. According to Symantec, when it detects that the user has copied a cryptowallet address, it replaces it with the address of a wallet controlled by the attackers, to redirect funds there.</p> <p>“On each clipboard update, it scans the clipboard content for wallet addresses, recognizing address formats used by at least a dozen different cryptocurrencies. [...] For the majority of the address formats, the attackers provide multiple replacement wallet addresses to choose from,” Symantec added.</p> <p>The researchers identified a total of 4,375 unique cryptowallet addresses within the malware, 3,677 of which are used for just three different formats of Bitcoin addresses.</p> <p>Symantec found roughly 34.3 Bitcoin and 129.9 Ethereum in some of the addresses controlled by the attackers and said that some other funds had previously been transferred to cryptocurrency mixing services.</p> <p>“If we include the funds transferred out to these services, the malware operators have potentially made at least \$1.7 million from clipboard hijacking alone,” the researchers added.</p>
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HEADLINE	<b>06/02 Connecticut \$150,000 ‘Misinfo sheriff’</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.vice.com/en/article/wxdwmm/connecticut-election-misinformation-sheriff">https://www.vice.com/en/article/wxdwmm/connecticut-election-misinformation-sheriff</a>
GIST	<p>Someone is going to be paid \$150,000 to trawl through 4chan, 8kun, Gettr, Rumble, and other toxic online swamps to find new misinformation narratives linked to the midterm elections in Connecticut.</p> <p>The position will be officially called an Election Information Security Analyst—or “<a href="#">Misinformation Sheriff</a>” as others have dubbed it—and will be a full-time role within the office of Connecticut Secretary of State Denise Merrill.</p>



The role is part of a broader effort by Merrill's office to combat "election misinformation and disinformation" ahead of the 2022 elections in November. The campaign will also include a \$2 million advertising campaign "to educate and inform the state's registered voters on voting how-to's, including absentee voting."

But for the Misinfo Sheriff, the focus will be less on education and more on discovery.

"We bat down the BS before it gets out there."

"We stay alert by having a full-time Election Information Security Analyst to help us identify false information about the election process," Scott Bates, Connecticut's Deputy Secretary of the State, told VICE News. "Once we identify the misinformation, we work with the National Association of Secretaries of State and [Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency], and they work with the social media platforms. We bat down the BS before it gets out there."

So essentially the role will involve monitoring mainstream social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, as well as less mainstream sites like Reddit and Telegram, and even less mainstream sites like 4chan and 8kun. Then the person taking the role will have to identify potential new misinformation campaigns that relate to election integrity in Connecticut.

Then the person will have to escalate through an established series of hierarchical networks that have been created to streamline the flagging of misinformation content related to elections. The end result is that the platform where the misinformation was found are asked to take it down.

There are no plans at the moment to make the content being flagged public, though the Secretary of State's office did say it was something it may consider.

The funding for the role becomes available on July 1. Gabe Rosenberg, Merrill's chief of staff, told VICE News that he hoped the successful candidate would be in place by July 15 at the latest.

The Secretary of State believes [these measures are needed](#) because, as outlined in the Gov. Ned Lamont's midterm budget, "malicious foreign actors have demonstrated the motivation and capability to significantly disrupt election activities, thus undermining public confidence in the fairness and accuracy of election results."

What Merrill doesn't mention is the fact that rather than overseas threats, the largest threat to the integrity of elections in America today comes from former President Donald Trump and his army of election deniers across the country.

Connecticut's new Misinfo Sheriff won't be tracking Trump or GOP misinformation, unless he is specifically speaking about Connecticut.

Trump's embrace of the sweeping conspiracy that claims the 2020 election was stolen from him has inspired sitting and prospective lawmakers to embrace the lie and inspire tens of millions of Americans to do the same.

And even before the role in Connecticut can be filled, Republicans are already calling it into question.

"This seems highly political," Ben Proto, chair of the state Republican Party, told the [New Haven Register](#) "This is just policing what is said about elections, and that's just wrong."

Rosenberg pointed out that the role was not partisan but for those who believe that the election was stolen, such statements matter very little.

Already since news of the appointment was publicized, Republicans have taken to comparing it to the creation of the "[Ministry of Truth](#)" in George Orwell's novel 1984.



This criticism is likely just the first very mild wave of attacks that the person who finally takes the job will face.

For those considering taking up the role, they should maybe consider what happened to Nina Jankowics earlier this year.

The Department of Homeland Security announced at the end of April that it was creating a Disinformation Governance Board with the stated goal to “coordinate countering misinformation related to homeland security.”

The creation of the board was a terrible idea from the off given that it ultimately had no power to do anything but what made it so much worse was the muddle communication from DHS about the board and its role.

In the end, a concerted right-wing campaign to demonize the board and its members—in particular its executive director Jankowicz—succeeded in forcing the DHS to [mothball the effort after just three weeks](#).

Combating election misinformation is vitally important, but spending so much money on a single staff position raises questions about just how effective it will be.

Imagine what will happen on the new Connecticut Misinfo Sheriff’s first day in the job if Trump-supporting gubernatorial candidate Bob Stefanowski tweets about a stolen election.

If the Misinfo Sheriff petitions Twitter to remove the post, then the right will be up in arms about violating First Amendment rights. If they don’t flag the tweet, then what’s the point of their position?

Rosenberg told VICE News that in a case such as this, there would be “no point” in flagging the post, as Twitter or Facebook typically does not remove such content.

And that’s the relatively straightforward aspect of the work. Try flagging an anonymous post about some Connecticut-related election conspiracy on the fringe message board 4chan to the moderators and see where that gets you. On a site where school shooting gunmen are valorized and revenge porn is openly welcomed, it’s unlikely Connecticut’s Misinfo Sheriff will get much of a response.

And these are the sites we know about. What about private Telegram channels, where much of the right-wing grassroots campaigns are being coordinated right now? Or private Discord servers that can’t be monitored?

As Ryan Broderick pointed out in his [Garbage Day newsletter](#) on Wednesday, there are better ways to spend \$150,000.

“Instead of paying someone to search “site:4chan.org Connecticut” four times a day, what if the state just invested all of that money in easily searchable and navigable government websites and social pages that all worked on mobile, updated frequently, and contained pertinent information written clearly and published in timely fashion? Revolutionary, right?

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HEADLINE	06/02 FBI sets sights on crypto economy
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2022/jun/02/fbi-arrest-former-opensea-staffer-nathaniel-chastain-crypto-nfts">https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2022/jun/02/fbi-arrest-former-opensea-staffer-nathaniel-chastain-crypto-nfts</a>
GIST	An ex-employee of the leading non-fungible tokens (NFT) marketplace has been charged with wire fraud and money-laundering offences in a sign that US law enforcement will no longer turn a blind eye to the crypto economy.

Nathaniel Chastain left his job as a product manager at OpenSea, the largest marketplace for NFTs – the unique crypto assets used to denote [ownership of items such as digital art](#) – after being accused of insider trading.

On Wednesday he was arrested by the FBI in New York and charged, in a case that could prove concerning for others in crypto who assumed that practices banned in regulated markets were fair game in the wild west sector.

Chastain is accused of using his insider knowledge of which tokens were going to be featured on the front page of OpenSea's website to buy them shortly before they were featured, and sell them immediately, cashing in on the increased awareness for a small profit each time.

US attorney Damian Williams said: "NFTs might be new, but this type of criminal scheme is not ... Today's charges demonstrate the commitment of this office to stamping out insider trading – whether it occurs on the stock market or the blockchain."

[Chastain's alleged trades had been noticed at the time](#). Thanks to the open nature of the NFT market, where all trades are written on to a public database called a blockchain, observers had spotted that someone was purchasing digital assets with questionable timing in September 2021.

The anonymous digital wallet used for the trades was soon linked via transactions to Chastain's own. OpenSea had not at the time issued an explicit policy against such insider trading, and acted only after Chastain's trades came to light.

In May, an apparent insider trading scheme was uncovered on a leading crypto exchange: a user who has not been identified would build up large positions in small cryptocurrencies shortly before they were listed on major exchanges, and then sell them for a profit in the resulting surge of interest. [A Wall Street Journal report](#) concluded that one such trade netted a profit of \$140,000 on a \$360,000 investment over less than a week.

But until Chastain's arrest this week, there was widespread debate over whether such practices were illegal, given the different norms and practices in the sector. For example the trade in so-called "shitcoins" – crypto assets created with no purpose other than to be bought and sold in a speculative market – is openly acknowledged to be full of practices that would be illegal in a regulated market.

According to pseudonymous "shitcoin influencer" Epitaph, the latest wheeze to boost the value of coins [is focused around "Larp tokens"](#). He said this referred to "tokens where the team will go to extreme lengths to convince buyers that they're connected to famous celebrities/musicians/larger tokens.

Sign up to the daily Business Today email or follow Guardian Business on Twitter at @BusinessDesk "It's no secret that everything we buy is a scam on some level. The question isn't 'is this token a scam,' because they all are, the question is: 'Is this scam done well enough to convince other people to buy?'"

Chastain's arrest comes as a group of more than 25 crypto experts have [written an open letter to the US Congress](#) calling for more regulation of the sector. "We implore you to take a truly responsible approach to technological innovation and ensure that individuals in the US and elsewhere are not left vulnerable to predatory finance, fraud, and systemic economic risks in the name of technological potential which does not exist," the group wrote.

Adding to the regulatory pressure, on Thursday the Commodity Futures Trading Commission sued Gemini, a New York-based crypto exchange [founded by the Winklevoss twins](#), alleging the company misled regulators about the possibility of bitcoin price manipulation in a successful effort to convince the agency to allow the creation of a bitcoin futures contract.

	An OpenSea spokesperson said: “When we learned of Nate’s behaviour, we initiated an investigation and ultimately asked him to leave the company. His behaviour was in violation of our employee policies and in direct conflict with our core values and principles.”
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HEADLINE	<b>06/03 Russia govt. confirms VPN crackdown</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://torrentfreak.com/new-vpn-crackdown-underway-in-russia-government-confirms-220603/">https://torrentfreak.com/new-vpn-crackdown-underway-in-russia-government-confirms-220603/</a>
GIST	<p>Authorities in Russia have confirmed that a new crackdown to prevent citizens from accessing VPN services is underway. Telecoms regulator Roscomnadzor says that "measures" are being taken to limit access to VPN services that violate Russian law, which can simply mean providing access to content previously deemed illegal by the government.</p> <p>Next month will mark the 10-year anniversary of a new law introduced by Russia to ensure the safety of its citizens online.</p> <p>The “Extremist Websites Blocking Law” created a national blacklist to prevent socially harmful websites from being accessed by the public.</p> <p>No longer would extremist, terrorist, Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM), or the promotion of illegal drugs be allowed to spread online. ISPs would block offending sites within hours of receiving a complaint and Russian society as a whole would benefit.</p> <p><b>Slippery Slope Ensues</b></p> <p>The government assured citizens that only illegal content would be blocked and the blacklist could even be supervised by an independent citizen monitoring group. In the event, telecoms regulator Roscomnadzor appointed itself supervisor but the government did keep its word to block only illegal content, by making more and more content illegal.</p> <p>Over the last decade Russia has introduced more laws to expand its blocking powers to encompass pirate streaming sites and torrent portals, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and any ‘illegal’ news sites that stray from the Kremlin’s definition of factual reporting.</p> <p>In the background, citizens accustomed to unblocking unlicensed media sites started using their VPN and Tor skills to get an unrestricted view of the world. Russia responded by placing <a href="#">strict rules on VPN servers</a> in Russia and then via the ‘VPN Law’, outlawed internet tools that enable access to illegal information.</p> <p><b>Information War Targets VPNs</b></p> <p>Russia has been using its anti-VPN legislation to remove <a href="#">hundreds of thousands</a> of VPN-related links from Google and since the invasion of Ukraine, has <a href="#">stepped up the pace</a>. Tor is also in the middle of a <a href="#">blocking drama</a> and now faces a <a href="#">court battle</a>.</p> <p>Over the past few days, Russian VPN users reported fresh issues when trying to access well-known providers such as NordVPN, which does not even have servers in Russia. Problems were also experienced when accessing Switzerland-based Proton VPN, peer-to-peer censorship circumvention tool Lantern, Windscribe, and <a href="#">related services</a> including VPN creation tool <a href="#">Outline</a>.</p> <p>“We are currently investigating the issue, but it is not caused by any changes on our side,” Proton <a href="#">announced</a>. “It is likely that the local ISPs and the authorities are interfering with VPN connections, in which case it may not be possible for us to solve such issues. Some servers may continue to work. We are continuing efforts to bypass the block.”</p> <p><b>Russia Admits Responsibility</b></p> <p>In a statement to local media, telecoms watchdog Roscomnadzor reiterated that website unblocking tools are illegal and measures are being taken to limit access to them.</p>

	<p>“According to the Law ‘On Communications’, means of bypassing blocking of illegal content are recognized as a threat. The Center for Monitoring and Control of the Public Communications Network is taking measures to limit the operation of VPN services in Russia that violate Russian law,” the government agency said.</p> <p>At least historically, VPN providers have usually been given notice that they need to come into compliance or face action but there are no signs that the targeted providers were notified in recent weeks. Whether it played a direct role is unclear but Proton previously offered Russians free access to its services, to bypass state censorship.</p> <p>On March 15, 2022, Alexander Khinshtein, chairman of the State Duma Committee on Information Policy, revealed that at least 20 VPN services are now being blocked in Russia and that Roscomnadzor intends to block more, if providers fail to comply with the law.</p> <p>A key problem for privacy-focused VPN providers is the Russian requirement to connect to the Federal State Information System which contains a register of sites and URLs deemed illegal in Russia. Most simply refuse and leave the country but when that is not possible, they are compelled to block sites themselves, a situation that <a href="#">Kaspersky failed to prevent</a>.</p>
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HEADLINE	<b>06/02 PulsePoint app launches across King Co.</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.king5.com/article/news/health/pulsepoint-launches-king-county/281-d8bd95c7-f643-4e9b-9c27-daf3650db430">https://www.king5.com/article/news/health/pulsepoint-launches-king-county/281-d8bd95c7-f643-4e9b-9c27-daf3650db430</a>
GIST	<p>KING COUNTY, Wash. — An app that notifies users when someone nearby is in cardiac arrest expanded its reach in western Washington on Thursday.</p> <p>King County fire departments joined others throughout the region already using <a href="#">PulsePoint</a>. The app sends an alert to nearby users so they can quickly help before first responders arrive.</p> <p>“When a person goes into sudden cardiac arrest, every minute without CPR reduces their chance of survival, so immediate help from a bystander who can do CPR is critical,” said Dr. Tom Rea, Emergency Medical Services program director for King County.</p> <p>The app uses location-based technology. Users receive an alert on their phone and given the location of the person in need of help and the location of nearby AED devices.</p> <p>The app only alerts people to cardiac arrest in public locations, not private residences.</p> <p>“The PulsePoint app means community members can help save lives by administering hands-only CPR,” said Kirkland Fire Chief Joe Sanford. “Whether neighbor or stranger, they can provide immediate help to someone in sudden cardiac arrest when they need it most – in those crucial minutes before medics get there.”</p> <p>Bringing the app to King County was a joint effort by fire departments, NORCOM 911, Valley Communications, King County Fire Chiefs Association and Medic One Foundation.</p> <p>“Our citizens are an integral part of the chain of survival and being notified by the PulsePoint app that someone nearby is in cardiac arrest can mean the difference between life and death,” Enumclaw Fire Chief Randy Fehr said.</p> <p>The Medic One Foundation is working with other fire agencies to bring the app to more communities in the region.</p>
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## Terror Conditions

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HEADLINE	06/03 Afghan refugees stuck in Balkan camp
SOURCE	<a href="https://apnews.com/article/afghanistan-kosovo-taliban-united-states-c3e7e49ac958afb0ba0a3c208a729972">https://apnews.com/article/afghanistan-kosovo-taliban-united-states-c3e7e49ac958afb0ba0a3c208a729972</a>
GIST	<p>WASHINGTON (AP) — For some Afghans who were evacuated as their country fell to the Taliban last summer, the journey to the United States has stalled, and perhaps ended, at a sun-baked cluster of tents and temporary housing on an American base in the Balkans.</p> <p>While more than 78,000 Afghans have arrived in the U.S. for resettlement since August, the future for those who have been flagged for additional security vetting and diverted to Camp Bondsteel, in the small nation of Kosovo, remains up in the air. The U.S. won't force the dozens there to return to Afghanistan, where they could face reprisals.</p> <p>Their frustration is growing. Some Afghans at the base, which has been shrouded in secrecy, took the unusual step this week of staging a protest, holding up signs with messages such as “we want justice,” according to photos sent to The Associated Press.</p> <p>“They just keep repeating the same things, that it takes time and we must be patient,” one of the Afghans, Muhammad Arif Sarwari, said in a text message from the base.</p> <p>Their complaints open a window into an aspect of the evacuation and resettlement of Afghans that has gotten little attention because U.S. authorities, and the government of Kosovo, have been reluctant to say much about the people sent to Bondsteel.</p> <p>The base houses a mix of adults and children, because some of the people who have so far failed to get a visa to the U.S. are traveling with family. Sarwari, a former senior intelligence official with the Afghan government, said there are about 45 people there, representing about 20 or so individual visa cases, after a flight to the U.S. left with 27 of the refugees on Wednesday.</p> <p>The Biden administration won't provide details, but acknowledges that some of the evacuees did not make it through what it calls a “a multi-layered, rigorous screening and vetting process” and won't be permitted to enter the U.S.</p> <p>“While the vast majority of Afghan evacuees have been cleared through this process, the small number of individuals who have been denied are examples of the system working exactly as it should,” said Sean Savett, a spokesman for the National Security Council.</p> <p>In all, about 600 Afghans have passed through Bondsteel, according to the government of Kosovo, which initially authorized use of the base for evacuees for a year but recently agreed to extend that until August 2023.</p> <p>Kosovo, which gained independence from Serbia in 2008 with U.S. support, has also provided little information about the Afghans at Bondsteel, citing the privacy of the refugees. Prime Minister Albin Kurti said in a statement that the government is proud of its role providing temporary shelter to them.</p> <p>Afghans are housed in a section of Bondsteel called Camp Liya, named for an Afghan child handed to the U.S. Marines over a fence at the Hamid Karzai International Airport during the evacuation, according to a U.S. military publication.</p> <p>It was the chaotic nature of that evacuation that led to the need for an overseas facility in the first place. As the Afghan government collapsed, thousands of people made it onto military transport planes with minimal screening before they arrived at one of several overseas transit points.</p>

The people sent to Bondsteel were stopped and diverted for a host of reasons, including missing or flawed documents or security concerns that emerged during overseas vetting by the FBI and the Department of Homeland Security, officials have said.

At the same time, some in Congress have criticized the administration for what they say has been inadequate vetting of Afghan refugees.

Sarwari made it to Kuwait from Afghanistan in early September with his wife and two of his daughters and says he doesn't know why he's been held up. He was a prominent figure in Afghanistan, serving as the former director of intelligence after the U.S. invasion in 2001. Before that, he was a top official with the anti-Taliban Northern Alliance.

Both positions would make him a target of the Taliban if he were to return.

"The vetting team keeps telling us sorry, Washington is just deciding some political issues," he said.

Sarwari has applied for a special immigrant visa, which is issued to people who worked for the U.S. government or its allies during the war. He has not received a response, according to his lawyer, Julie Sirrs.

"In theory, he is free to leave but it's not clear where he could go," Sirrs said. "He obviously cannot return to Afghanistan. He's clearly in danger if he returns."

He and others live a circumscribed existence on Bondsteel. Although technically not detained, they cannot leave the arid, rocky base and have spent months in tents, which were adorned with handwritten signs during this week's protest. One said "unfair decision," while another said "children are suffering."

The Biden administration says authorities have determined that some — it won't say how many — simply cannot be allowed to enter the U.S. It is working to find other countries that don't harbor the same security concerns and are willing to accept them for resettlement. No one will be forcibly returned to Afghanistan, the NSC spokesperson said.

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HEADLINE	<b>06/03 UN: Taliban faces threat of IS, resistance</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.usnews.com/news/us/articles/2022-06-03/un-taliban-faces-threat-from-islamic-state-new-resistance">https://www.usnews.com/news/us/articles/2022-06-03/un-taliban-faces-threat-from-islamic-state-new-resistance</a>
GIST	<p>UNITED NATIONS (AP) — Afghanistan's Taliban rulers are maintaining close ties with al-Qaida as they consolidate control over the country, and their main military threat is coming from the Islamic State extremist group and guerrilla-style attacks by former Afghan government security personnel, U.N. experts said in a new report.</p> <p>The experts said in the report to the U.N. Security Council that with the onset of better weather, fighting may escalate as both Islamic State and resistance forces undertake operations against Taliban forces.</p> <p>But neither IS nor al-Qaida "is believed to be capable of mounting international attacks before 2023 at the earliest, regardless of their intent or of whether the Taliban acts to restrain them," the panel of experts said.</p> <p>Nonetheless, it said the presence of IS, al-Qaida, and "many other terrorist groups and fighters on Afghan soil" is raising concerns in neighboring countries and the wider international community.</p> <p>Since their takeover of Afghanistan last Aug. 15 as U.S. and NATO forces were in the final stages of their chaotic withdrawal from the country after 20 years, the Taliban "have favored loyalty and seniority over competence, and their decision-making has been opaque and inconsistent," the experts said.</p>

In the report obtained Thursday, the panel monitoring sanctions against the Taliban said its leaders have appointed 41 men on the U.N. sanctions blacklist to the Cabinet and senior positions, and they have favored the country's dominant Pashtun ethnic group, alienating minority communities including ethnic Tajiks and Uzbeks.

The Taliban's primary concern has been to consolidate control "while seeking international recognition, to re-engage with the international financial system and to receive aid in order to deal with the growing economic and humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan," the experts said.

"Since taking power, however, there have been many factors creating internal tensions within the movement, leading to perceptions that the Taliban's governance has been chaotic, disjointed and prone to reversing policies and going back on promises.," they said.

As the Taliban struggle to transition from an insurgency to a governing body, they have been divided between pragmatists and hardliners who have gained the upper hand and want to turn the clock back to the group's harsh rule from 1996 until December 2001, when they were ousted from power by U.S. forces following the 9/11 attacks on the United States.

To date, their efforts to win recognition and aid from Western nations have floundered, largely because they have not formed a more representative government, and have restricted the rights of girls to education beyond elementary school, and of women to work and travel without a male relative's oversight.

"The central dilemma is how a movement with an inflexible ideology can engage with a society that has evolved during the past 20 years," the experts said. "Further stresses revolve around power, resources, and regional and ethnic divisions."

Despite these serious issues, the panel said the Taliban "appear confident in their ability to control the country and 'wait out' the international community to obtain eventual recognition of their government."

"They assess that, even if they make no significant concessions, the international community will ultimately recognize them as the government of Afghanistan, especially in the absence of a government in exile or significant internal resistance," the experts said.

So far, not a single country has officially recognized the Taliban, and there is growing international anger at its treatment of girls and women and its failure to keep its promise of forming an inclusive government. There are also concerns about the Taliban's inability to keep its promise not to allow terrorist groups to operate in Afghanistan.

The panel said the Haqqani Network, a militant Islamist group with close ties to the Taliban, moved quickly after their takeover to gain control of key portfolios and ministries including interior, intelligence, passports and migration. It now "largely controls security in Afghanistan, including the security of the capital, Kabul," the experts said.

"The Haqqani Network is still regarded as having the closest links to al-Qaida," the panel said, and the relationship between the Taliban and al-Qaida also remains close. The experts pointed to the reported presence of al-Qaida's "core leadership" in eastern Afghanistan including its leader Ayman al-Zawahri.

To counter the Islamic State, the report quoted an unidentified country as saying the Taliban have created three battalions of special forces called "red units."

The emergence of the National Resistance Front and Afghanistan Freedom Front comprising former Afghan security personnel "has led the Taliban to adopt aggressive measures against populations suspected of supporting anti-Taliban operations," the panel said.

In April, it said National Resistance Front forces stepped up operations in Badakhshan, Baghlan, Jowzjan, Kunduz, Panjshir, Takhar and Samangan provinces.



	<p>The Afghan Freedom Front, which only emerged recently, “has also claimed several attacks on Taliban bases in Badakhshan, Kandahar, Parwan and Samangan,” the experts said.</p> <p>“Taliban forces may be hard pressed to counter several insurgencies simultaneously,” they said.</p>
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## Suspicious, Unusual

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HEADLINE	<b>06/03 National Doughnut Day</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.upi.com/Odd_News/2022/06/03/National-Doughnut-Day-Salvation-Army-volunteers-World-War-I/4441654203764/">https://www.upi.com/Odd_News/2022/06/03/National-Doughnut-Day-Salvation-Army-volunteers-World-War-I/4441654203764/</a>
GIST	<p>June 3 (UPI) -- National Doughnut Day, celebrated annually on the first Friday in June, began in 1938 as a tribute to the Salvation Army volunteers who served doughnuts to soldiers on the front lines of World War I.</p> <p>The holiday <a href="#">was founded by the</a> Salvation Army in 1938 as a tribute to the Salvation Army "Lassies," volunteer women who delivered doughnuts and other home-cooked foods to troops <a href="#">on the front lines of</a> World War I.</p> <p>The first Doughnut Day served as a fundraiser for the Salvation Army in Chicago, and today the holiday <a href="#">is still used for</a> Salvation Army fundraisers across the country. The organization often teams with local doughnut shops for the event.</p> <p>Other <a href="#">holidays and observances for June 3, 2022</a>, include Chimborazo Day, Hug An Atheist Day, Impersonate Authority Day, Love Conquers All Day, National Chocolate Macaroon Day, National Egg Day, National Gun Violence Awareness Day, National Itch Day, Repeat Day and World Clubfoot Day.</p>
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HEADLINE	<b>06/02 Study: humid air is melting Greenland's ice</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.washingtonpost.com/weather/2022/06/02/greenland-melt-warm-climate-change/">https://www.washingtonpost.com/weather/2022/06/02/greenland-melt-warm-climate-change/</a>
GIST	<p>Jason Box waited for the skies to clear. The climatologist's team was already in southern Greenland to begin their research project, but he was stuck in Nuuk, the country's capital, because weather delayed his travels. Dark clouds loomed overhead, while the patter of rain echoed loudly as it fell onto the ocean.</p> <p>Unbeknown to him, this same weather system was causing a historic melt event 660 miles away at the summit of Greenland. On Aug. 14, 2021, the system drew exceptionally warm and moist air from southern latitudes northward, increasing temperatures around 32 degrees (18 Celsius) higher than normal. Rain, not snow, fell on Greenland's summit for the <a href="#">first time on record</a>. Melting persisted over the next two weeks, covering 46 percent of the ice sheet. This was the largest melt event to occur so late in the year.</p> <p>“The weather was atrocious,” said Box, a professor at the Geological Survey of Denmark and Greenland. “I didn’t know that it was as big as it was.”</p> <p>The “atrocious” weather was caused by a warm, narrow band of water vapor in the sky, known as an atmospheric river. The term “atmospheric river” has recently become popularized in media due to its role in extreme weather. As the plume of water vapor makes landfall, it precipitates as rain or snow. In the fall and winter, atmospheric rivers bring much of California’s annual precipitation but can also unleash intense flooding. In July 2021, an atmospheric river brought flooding to Germany, which killed more than 200 people.</p> <p>In Greenland, these warm rivers in the sky also play a role in melting the ice sheet. Amid rising temperatures, Greenland has lost more ice mass than it gained for 25 years in a row. In that time, melting</p>

ice from Greenland has added about 0.4 inches to sea level rise — equivalent to adding water from 120 million Olympic-size swimming pools each year. If the entire ice sheet were to melt, sea level could increase by more than 20 feet.

In a study released Thursday, Box and his colleagues illuminate how an atmospheric river caused the August 2021 melt event and brought rain to the summit. The explanation foretells a future that could be increasingly common as global temperatures rise due to human-caused climate change, accelerating sea level rise.

The video shows flooding conditions on the Greenland ice sheet on Aug. 19, 2021. (Dirk van As)  
“What we realize is that the atmospheric river is much more about the heat. And the heat did a tremendous amount of melting,” Box said. “What I would argue unnatural is there’s more heat in the system and you’re getting greater extremes.”

Atmospheric rivers tend to originate from southern latitudes far removed from Greenland, where warm air causes ocean water to evaporate into the atmosphere. Atmospheric steering winds help transport the vapor great distances. Box described the rivers as a natural process to transfer energy from the tropics to the pole. “There’s a tremendous amount of heat in these circulation systems,” he said.

As an atmospheric river landed over Greenland in August, the study found the majority of melt resulted from elevated air temperatures, which darkened the ice sheet surface and increased the absorption of sunlight. Satellite data showed melting snow crept up to higher elevations and exposed relatively dark bare ice. Where snow remained, surface melting deformed the snow crystals and made them darker, which led to additional melting under sunny skies in the following days.

“The surface is in a darkened state and stays like that for more than a week. And so that effectively doubles the melting,” Box said.

Box and his colleagues determined that the darkened snow increased melt by 28 percent in one location at an altitude of 6,036 feet. At a location 4,167 feet high, they determined that melting would have been cut in half if the bare ice were not exposed. Discharge from the Watson River, in the Kangerlussuaq region in central-western Greenland, was also the highest for this period in August in 16 years of records.

“One of the major things they point out ... was how you get these sequence of these events where warm air comes in and gets rain on snow,” said Bill Neff, a research scientist at the Cooperative Institute for Research in Environmental Sciences at the University of Colorado Boulder who was not involved in the study. “The warm air and the radiation from warm clouds can melt the snow and it changes the properties of the snow so that when the sky is clear and the sun is shining, it keeps melting.”

Neff said the August melting was similar to other recent major melt events. In the past decade, Greenland experienced three major melt years, 2012, 2019 and 2021, which were all tied to atmospheric rivers. Before 2012, he said the last major melt event connected to an atmospheric river was more than 100 years ago.

The number of atmospheric rivers over Greenland “hasn’t really changed that much. They go up and down a lot over the last hundred years, but what they’re doing is tapping into hotter regions of the Earth,” he said. “You can have the same number of atmospheric rivers bringing warmer air from all over the place. If there are more places getting hotter, then there’s more chance to be more melting.”

Neff’s research looks at how heat waves have played a part in Greenland melt events. He previously found that Greenland’s 2012 melt season, which is still the largest melt season ever observed, was partly spawned from warm air originating from a record heat wave in North America. A heat wave developed suddenly in the Midwest, which created a pulse of hot air that was transported to Greenland via an atmospheric river.

In July 2019, warm air from a heat wave in Europe headed to Greenland and helped trigger one of the biggest surface melt days on record.

Neff said the August 2021 melt event was associated with warm air masses moving across North America that probably combined with moisture from the south Atlantic, before moving to the southwest coast of Greenland.

Climate change is intensifying these events by increasing the amount of water vapor an atmospheric river can hold, said Kyle Mattingly, an atmospheric scientist at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. A warmer atmosphere increases the rate of evaporation and allows for more water to enter the vapor phase. His research found the amount of moisture transported over the summer melt season in Greenland has been increasing in recent decades.

“If you sum up the amount of moisture that atmospheric rivers transport during each melt season, that is showing an increasing trend,” said Mattingly, who was not involved in the study released Thursday. “I feel pretty certain that there is a link there between increasing atmospheric river moisture transport and increases in Greenland melt.”

As this year’s melt season begins in Greenland, researchers are unsure what to expect as predicting events more than a week or so in advance is challenging. Melt activity has been close to normal so far, aside from slight melting in late May on the ice sheet’s periphery.

“There’s nothing so far to indicate that we’re going to have a particularly really large melt season,” Mattingly said.

But then again, Mattingly said the record 2012 melt season also started out slow before accelerating in the middle of the summer.

“You never quite know until it happens,” Mattingly said.

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HEADLINE	06/02 Global heating turning white Alps into green
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2022/jun/02/global-heating-is-turning-white-alps-green-study-finds">https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2022/jun/02/global-heating-is-turning-white-alps-green-study-finds</a>
GIST	<p>The impact of global heating on the Alps is visible from space, with the snow-white mountains increasingly colonised by green plants, according to a study of high-resolution satellite data.</p> <p>Vegetated areas above the treeline in the Alps have increased by 77% since 1984, the study says. While retreating glaciers have symbolised the speed of global heating in the Alpine region, researchers described the increases in plant biomass as an “absolutely massive” change.</p> <p>Rising temperatures and increased rainfall are prolonging the growing season, with plants colonising new areas, and becoming denser and taller. Snow cover is decreasing, and the scientists said losses of less than 10% of snow cover above the treeline were still significant.</p> <p>“The scale of the change has turned out to be absolutely massive in the Alps,” said Prof Sabine Rumpf, of the University of Basel, and lead author of <a href="#">the paper which was published in Science</a>.</p> <p>Mountain areas are heating about twice as fast as the global average. And while the greening of the Alps could increase carbon sequestration, this is likely to be outweighed by negative implications, including <a href="#">thawing permafrost</a>, a reduced <a href="#">albedo effect</a> – less snow reflecting away sunlight – and habitat loss.</p> <p>According to Rumpf, more plants at high altitudes could paradoxically threaten many specialist Alpine plants, which are well adapted to harsh conditions but not very competitive. As conditions become conducive to growth, these are crowded out by more vigorous, common plants from lower altitudes.</p>

	<p>“The unique biodiversity of the Alps is therefore under considerable pressure,” said Rumpf.</p> <p>In contrast to vegetation, snow cover above the treeline has changed more modestly, declining significantly in almost 10% of the area, which excludes glaciers and areas below 1,700 metres. The researchers said this was still a worrying trend.</p> <p>Prof Antoine Guisan, of the University of Lausanne, said: “Previous analyses of satellite data hadn’t identified any such trend. This may be because the resolution of the satellite images was insufficient or because the periods considered were too short.”</p> <p>Although the high-resolution data does not detect changes in the depth of snow, ground-based measurements have shown decreases in depth at low elevations for some years.</p> <p>The scientists said that as larger areas of the Alps turned from white to green, a feedback loop was created that led to an increased pace of heating and snow melt.</p> <p>“Greener mountains reflect less sunlight and therefore lead to further warming – and, in turn, to further shrinkage of reflective snow cover,” Rumpf said of the albedo effect.</p> <p>Heating also causes further melting of glaciers and the thawing of permafrost, which may lead to more landslides, rockfalls and mudflows.</p>
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HEADLINE	<b>06/02 Dolphins dying Black Sea; war casualties?</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/02/world/europe/dolphins-dying-ukraine-war.html">https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/02/world/europe/dolphins-dying-ukraine-war.html</a>
GIST	<p>Dolphins burned from bomb or mine explosions. Several thousand suddenly found dead, some washed up on the coasts of Bulgaria, Romania, Turkey and Ukraine.</p> <p>The sudden and mysterious death of so many of the elegant marine mammals is raising alarm among some scientists that the war in Ukraine may be taking a growing toll on life in the Black Sea.</p> <p>The battles waged along Ukraine’s coastline have done untold environmental damage and have interfered with dolphins’ habitat, scientists say. But the war has made it impossible to gather detailed information, leaving the dolphin deaths a mystery for now.</p> <p>Recent studies from Bulgaria, Turkey and Ukraine found that marine biodiversity was under growing threat because of the war, including from bombs dropping in coastal feeding areas, oil from sunken ships and river runoff polluted by chemicals used in ammunition.</p> <p>Ivan Rusev, an environmental scientist at Ukraine’s Tuzla Estuaries National Nature Park, said that data collected by his organization since the start of the war indicated that several thousand dolphins had been killed. He said increased ship noise and use of powerful sonar systems may also be disorienting dolphins, which use sound to navigate.</p> <p>“Some of the dolphins had burns from bomb or mine explosions and they could no longer navigate and of course could not look for food,” he wrote.</p> <p>The Turkish Marine Research Foundation reported in March <a href="#">“an extraordinary increase”</a> in dead dolphins washing ashore there. It said that dolphins were being caught in fishing nets and it was investigating why such incidents had grown in number, including whether military activity in the northern Black Sea was playing a role.</p>

	<p>“Along with marine pollution, ship noise and low frequency sonars are known to be a serious threat to the marine species, especially to dolphins, which utilize underwater sounds actively to feed and navigate,” the Turkish researchers said.</p> <p>The Turkish Marine Research Foundation has also said that the war is taking <a href="#">a devastating toll</a> on broader marine biodiversity.</p> <p>The Russian Navy dominates the Black Sea off the coast of Ukraine and has imposed a blockade on all Ukrainian shipping. Russia waged brutal campaigns to win control of several key Ukrainian ports along the Black Sea and the adjoining Sea of Azov and its warships patrol the waters around Ukraine.</p> <p>Before the war, 100 scientists representing an international cetacean conservation treaty group and employing 10 aircraft and six ships <a href="#">surveyed marine life</a> in the Black Sea and Mediterranean area. They found that the Black Sea was home to more than 253,000 dolphins, a healthy number that scientists said offered a positive ecological indicator of the overall ecosystem.</p> <p>Now, however, it remains to be seen what the final toll of war may be on dolphins and other marine life.</p>
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HEADLINE	<b>06/02 Lone resident of WA Protection Island</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.king5.com/article/news/local/protection-island-washington-lone-resident/281-dd466b30-7196-43ae-b6ec-8a927e2ef480">https://www.king5.com/article/news/local/protection-island-washington-lone-resident/281-dd466b30-7196-43ae-b6ec-8a927e2ef480</a>
GIST	<p>PORT TOWNSEND, Wash. — Life can be complicated when you live on a deserted island -- especially when your boat sank last winter.</p> <p>“Well, that's the thing about living on the island,” said Marty Bluewater. “It is kind of a paradise, but if something goes wrong it can go real wrong.”</p> <p>Marty lives a life few can imagine.</p> <p>It’s a life of solitude and peace in one of the most <a href="#">pristine parts of the Northwest</a> -let alone the country. But right now, he’s just worried about getting back home, and getting a new boat put in the water.</p> <p>‘It's been really inconvenient, but Joe has saved the day by bringing us over in his boat," he said, referring to a friend giving him a ride back to the island paradise that he calls “Fantasy Island.”</p> <p>Marty Bluewater is 73 years old and lives by himself on <a href="#">Protection Island</a> in the Strait of Juan de Fuca. In fact, he’s the only person who lives on the island.</p> <p>Fifty-one years ago, Marty and his parents paid \$7,000 for a vacation property on Protection Island. It was supposed to be huge development with 1,000 homes, but in the 1980s environmentalists stepped in and requested the island be designated a National Wildlife Refuge.</p> <p>Marty supported that position, but his family had already purchased the land.</p> <p>After a long legal battle, the family was offered a settlement and the opportunity of a lifetime. He could stay on the island forever.</p> <p>“They gave the option of ‘life use.’ At the time I thought, life use? Whatever that means I'll take it,” said Marty with a wide grin. “The fact that I'd end up the only person here, I could've never dreamed that up in a million years.”</p> <p>A retired Seattle Parks worker and Woodland Park Zoo manager, Marty spends his days far from the rat race of city life. He cuts driftwood to burn for heat. The closest thing to a traffic jam is a flock of seagulls on an unpaved road. After more than half a century here, he is one with nature.</p>

“Now, I just feel like I'm another one of the creatures running around,” he said, “and the way I’ve built my cabin, it feels like my little nest.

Surrounded by soaring bald eagles, noisy seabirds, and seals sunning themselves on rocks, the simple life is for Marty.

“The big thing was when we finally got a toilet in here,” he chuckled. “To actually flush a toilet was a big, momentous time.”

Marty has no electricity. Everything runs on batteries or solar power.

“What I spend on double A and triple A batteries every year is ridiculous,” he said. “Thank God for Costco.”

Marty’s water comes from a well powered by a generator.

Propane heats that water, providing Marty with one of his greatest indulgences.

“I can count maybe no more than twice that I've used the inside shower,” he said, pointing to an exposed outdoor shower he built on the deck of his cabin. “I come out here in the snow. Sometimes I'll come out here in the middle of a clear, starry night and take a shower just for the heck of it.”

If his boat isn't running, friends ferry Marty to the mainland for supplies.

Those friends have become a critical connection to the outside world.

“I don’t get lonely,” he said. “I've got so many friends that come and go, so when I'm here by myself it's because I want to be here by myself.”

But island life does carry its concerns. [Last summer a fire broke out](#) on the island that threatened all Marty has worked for.

The cause remains unknown.

“It got pretty close to my cabin which would have been a total disaster and broke my heart completely,” he said.

A few years ago, Marty slipped and broke his ankle.

“Fortunately, my cell phone worked, so I called some people and told them what happened. I was able to make my way to the mainland and they took me to the hospital. Had it been any worse I would have had to call the Coast Guard.”

Most concerning, however, is what he sees as a natural imbalance on the island. He believes eagles are threatening the seabird population.

“That's a problem for two reasons,” Marty said. “Number one because you don't want the seabirds to be endangered. Seventy percent of the seabirds in Puget Sound come here to nest. Also, they broke a lot of hearts and took away this land from a lot of people to preserve this as a seabird sanctuary. So, you can't let the eagles destroy that, as much as we all love eagles.”

Marty lets everyone know he's at home at his cabin when he flies three giant multi-colored flags off the south cliff of his property.

	<p>He is the proud protector of Protection Island, and will be the last human to ever live there. When he dies the island becomes the property of the federal government.</p> <p>"I probably care about this island more than anybody and that will never change," he said, wiping away a tear. "This island is so important to me for so many reasons. It has been a giant part of my life. That's beside the point that it's just a beautiful place to be. It's a special piece on the earth. I just feel blessed that somehow I got to be a big part of it."</p>
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HEADLINE	<b>06/03 Meet the American who invented the donut</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.foxnews.com/lifestyle/meet-american-invented-donut">https://www.foxnews.com/lifestyle/meet-american-invented-donut</a>
GIST	<p>Americans have a "hole" lotta love for the donut.</p> <p>Credit <a href="#">Maine mariner</a> Captain Hanson Crockett Gregory for that. The then-future high-seas hero, in a moment of deliciously divine inspiration as a teenage galley boy, turned a poorly cooked blob of sailors' sustenance into the iconic, ring-shaped and deep-fried delicacy we know and love today.</p> <p>His innovation changed the way people in the U.S., and now much of the world, eat breakfast.</p> <p>Captain Gregory "was bold and brave and bright," enthused Texas author Pat Miller, who first heard of the culinary innovator amid a boat tour of Boston Harbor.</p> <p>She chronicled the adventurous life of Gregory (1832-1921) in her 2016 children's book, "The Hole Story of the Doughnut" (Harper Collins).</p> <p>U.S. consumers eat more than <a href="#">10 billion donuts</a> per year, according to the Simmons National Consumer Survey — while an incredible 96% of Americans say they enjoy donuts.</p> <p>But Gregory's long-lasting contribution to American culinary culture has gone largely unrecognized, save for the epithet upon his humble gravestone in a small, isolated sailors' cemetery in Quincy, Mass., overlooking Boston Harbor, where he lived out his final years.</p> <p>It reads simply: "Capt. Hanson Gregory. Recognized by the National Bakers Ass'n as the inventor of the doughnut."</p> <p><b>The donut turns 175</b></p> <p>Donut lovers celebrate National Donut Day on the first Friday of June — June 3, 2022, this year — in honor of the Salvation Army members who fed the deep-fried rings of fried dough to American soldiers in Europe during <a href="#">World War I</a>.</p> <p>The culinary world should celebrate another milestone later this month as well. The donut turns 175 years old on June 22.</p> <p>That was the day, in 1847, that teenage sailor Gregory thought of an innovative solution to a problem plaguing the hungry crew of the sailing ship Ivanhoe.</p> <p>Dough that was deep-fried in cauldrons of lard had been served to sailors on the seas for centuries. Dutch cooks made a notable version called oily cakes.</p> <p><b>"When [the cakes] were fried, they were completely fried through. The idea caught on."</b></p> <p><a href="#">Washington Irving</a> grew to become America's first celebrity writer chronicling the life of Dutch settlers in the Hudson River Valley. He's believed to be the first to use the phrase "dough-nuts" to describe the Dutch treat in his 1809 treatise, "A History of New York."</p>



They were not the donuts as we know today.

It was "just a big blob of dough," Miller told Fox News Digital. "The center would remain greasy and partially cooked."

They were so dense, doughy and uncooked that "sailors called them sinkers," she said.

Gregory, just 15 at the time, was struck by an idea to lighten the sinker. He took the lid off a water-tight tin can that was used to store pepper in the ship galley.

"He used it like a cookie cutter. He cut out the center of the oily cakes," she said, while displaying a 19th-century tin spice can, with its sharp-edged lid.

"Then, when [the cakes] were fried, they were completely fried through. The idea caught on. It spread around the world because sailors told sailors."

She wrote in her book, "Ships' cooks now served holey cakes" instead of oily cakes.

Hanson's mom introduced the innovation to landlubbers, selling them at a friend's general store in their native midcoast Maine, Miller said.

"Well, sir, those donuts were the finest ever tasted," an elderly Captain Gregory told The Patriot Ledger of Quincy, Mass., in a 1916 interview, as in his golden years he gained recognition for his invention of years earlier.

"No more indigestion — no more sinkers — just well-done, fried-through doughnuts."

He proclaimed they were "the first holes ever seen by mortal eyes!"

The influence of the donut on American culture had only just begun.

Boston-area entrepreneur William Rosenberg opened the [first Dunkin' Donuts](#) in 1950 in Quincy — less than a mile as the crow flies from the sailors' cemetery where Captain Gregory has laid at rest since 1921.

The proximity of the original donut maker's burial place, and the birth of the nation's largest and most famous donut chain, appears to be nothing more than a quirky coincidence.

The Carvalho family now owns the original Dunkin' location — still in the same spot as it was in 1950, open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

It's something of a tourist attraction, drawing donut lovers from as far away as Saudi Arabia, franchisee Victor Carvalho told Fox News Digital.

"We feel a sense of pride and responsibility," he said, charged as they are with the ownership of an American culinary landmark. Yet even the Carvalho family, he said, only recently became aware that Gregory was buried a short distance away, across a narrow finger of Boston Harbor called Town River. Scott Logan is charged with the care of Gregory's grave as the head of the City of Quincy's cemeteries department.

He grew up playing football, baseball and softball behind Snug Harbor School, just feet from the donut maker's burial place. Yet he only became aware of the donut pioneer in his role as cemetery caretaker.

"Everyone in Quincy knows about Dunkin' Donuts," Logan said. "Nobody knows the guy who invented the donut is buried right here. Nobody ever asks about him."

The Rosenberg family who founded Dunkin' apparently recognized Gregory's influence in later years. They reportedly paid to have the captain's current gravestone erected in 1982, with a ceremony featuring local schoolchildren, after his original burial marker went missing.

"We owe an enormous debt of gratitude to Gregory," the family told UPI at the time.

Dunkin' today boasts 12,600 donut shops in 40 countries, including 8,500 in the U.S. alone. It sells about 2 billion donuts and Munchkin donut holes worldwide each year, the company told Fox News Digital.

### **Heroism at sea, defense of the donut on land**

Captain Gregory lived a dramatic life of high-seas adventure well after his teenage epiphany.

Among other claims to fame, he helped fuel the settlement of California, delivering supplies, lime most notably, from New England, around the dangerous seas of Cape Horn at the tip of South America; and then San Francisco as well, in the wake of the frenzy of development caused by the Gold Rush.

Along the way, Gregory rescued seven Spanish sailors from drowning aboard a sinking ship. His intrepidity earned him honors from Queen Isabella II of Spain herself.

The captain later named one of his daughters in honor of her majesty, according to Miller.

Gregory died in 1921, without full recognition of his trend-setting creation.

His legacy as the inventor of donuts was elevated, however, during "The Great Doughnut Debate" of 1941 at Hotel Astor in New York City, according to a Smithsonian Magazine report in 1975. The captain's relative, Fred E. Crockett, spoke in defense of the family.

Cape Cod attorney Henry A. Ellis sought to debunk the claim of the Crockett/Gregory family, with a tall tale that the donut can be traced to a scuffle between Pilgrims and Native American people in the 1620s, in which a Wampanoag fired an arrow through an Englishman's ball of dough.

"The issue was never really in doubt," Smithsonian reported.

"Mr. Crockett's presentation included an array of affidavits, letters and other documents. Captain Gregory was the unanimous choice of the judges."

The industry cemented Gregory's position in 1948, when the National Bakers Association confirmed Captain Gregory as the inventor of the donut — his status as an American innovator literally etched in stone overlooking the ocean on which he spent his life.

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## **Crime, Criminals**

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HEADLINE	06/03 Shooting highlights vulnerability hospitals
SOURCE	<a href="https://apnews.com/article/tulsa-oklahoma-shootings-2183a9c1d41085a0fb82b9bae9924db7">https://apnews.com/article/tulsa-oklahoma-shootings-2183a9c1d41085a0fb82b9bae9924db7</a>
GIST	<p>Hospitals, like schools, are not typically designed to guard against the threat of a determined gunman entering the building to take lives.</p> <p>The vulnerability of health care facilities was highlighted by a shooter who killed four people and then himself Wednesday at a hospital in Tulsa, Oklahoma. The assailant got inside a building on the Saint Francis Hospital campus with little trouble, just hours after buying an AR-style rifle, authorities said.</p> <p>Here's a look at what's known about security at the Tulsa facility and other American hospitals:</p>

## DID THE GUNMAN HAVE TO PASS THROUGH SECURITY?

No, the 45-year-old man identified as the shooter, Michael Louis, of Muskogee, Oklahoma, parked his car in an adjoining garage, then went through unlocked doors into the medical building, authorities said.

“It is an entry that is open to the public,” Tulsa Police Chief Wendell Franklin told reporters Thursday. “He was able to walk in without any type of challenge.”

It was a short walk from that entrance to the office area where Louis fatally shot his primary target, Dr. Preston Phillips. Police said Phillips recently performed surgery on Louis and that Louis blamed the doctor for chronic pain he still suffered.

Once Louis got in, “he began firing at anyone who was in his way,” Franklin said. At least one person holding a door open for others to escape was killed.

## COULD BETTER SECURITY HAVE STOPPED THE SHOOTER?

The president and CEO of Saint Francis Health System said nothing can stop somebody with guns “hellbent on causing harm.”

Dr. Cliff Robertson did not provide details about hospital security. He said the facility has procedures to deal with “difficult, unhappy patients,” though he did not elaborate.

Hospital officials planned to review their security procedures in the days ahead. There “will be a thousand questions” to answer regarding the shooting, Robertson said.

From official accounts, the reaction time of officers could not have been much better. Wendell said officers responded to the shooting within minutes and that the shooter apparently killed himself as police approached.

## IS IT STANDARD FOR HOSPITALS TO LEAVE SOME ENTRYWAYS OPEN?

Yes, because some urgent medical situations require patients to be moved quickly. But some hospitals, especially ones that have dealt with violence on their grounds, have upgraded security in recent years.

Mercy Hospital in Chicago beefed up security after a 2019 attack in which a man fatally shot an attending physician who was his ex-fiance in the parking lot. He then entered the hospital, where he shot and killed a pharmacy resident and a police officer before he was fatally shot himself.

Now security officers are stationed at every entrance, and the hospital has a system that electronically notifies employees of any armed intruders.

## HOW COMMON ARE SHOOTINGS AT HOSPITALS?

From 2000 to 2011, there were 154 hospital-related shootings, according to a 2017 guide from the International Association of Emergency Medical Services Chiefs that cited the Annals of Emergency Medicine.

Nearly 60 percent of those shootings were inside hospitals, and around 40 were outside on hospital grounds, the guide said.

The attacks resulted in 235 people wounded or killed, according to the guide, which also cited data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics that indicated violence is four times more likely in health care than in other industries.

## WHAT ARE SOME UNIQUE CHALLENGES FOR HOSPITALS?

Some patients have limited mobility, and many staff members are obligated to stay with them in dangerous situations, sometimes making quick evacuations impossible.

Also, hospital buildings are often labyrinths, with many doors that lead to more doors. The Tulsa police chief said that was the case in the shooting on Wednesday, when the building's vastness created echoes, which made it harder for officers and others inside to know precisely where the gunshots were coming from.

#### WHAT ELSE HAVE HOSPITALS DONE TO IMPROVE SECURITY?

Even before the 2019 shooting at Chicago Mercy, the hospital had begun training employees about what to do during an active gunman situation. That included instructions on retreating into rooms, locking doors and turning out lights.

Training sessions at the hospital that were held annually before the 2019 shooting are now held four times a year, said Paul Stewart, a spokesman for the hospital, which is now called Insight Hospital and Medical Center.

Out of concern about people entering with guns, some hospitals have also installed metal detectors. At Chicago's UI Health, which is affiliated with the University of Illinois, metal detectors were installed in the emergency room, though not nearly as many as nurses and other health care workers asked for.

Nurses complain that patients entering with guns are far too common.

"They did that after someone brought in a semi-automatic weapon and was actually making a video on his phone about how he was going to kill nurses," said Paul Pater, a nurse at the hospital.

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HEADLINE	<b>06/02 Mass shootings 2022: 231</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2022/06/02/mass-shootings-in-2022/">https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2022/06/02/mass-shootings-in-2022/</a>
GIST	<p>Before a man <a href="#">killed at least four people Wednesday at a hospital in Tulsa</a>, there had already been 231 mass shootings this year in the United States, according to the <a href="#">Gun Violence Archive</a>. It is the twentieth since last week's shooting at an elementary school in Uvalde, Tex., left <a href="#">19 children and two teachers</a> dead.</p> <p>Mass shootings, where four or more people — not including the shooter — are injured or killed, have averaged more than one per day so far this year. Not a single week in 2022 has passed without at least four mass shootings.</p> <p>Mass shootings have been on the rise in recent years. In 2021, almost 700 such incidents occurred, a jump from the 611 in 2020 and 417 in 2019. Before that, incidents had not topped 400 annually since the Gun Violence Archive started tracking in 2014.</p> <p>This year is on pace with last year's high when comparing the same time period.</p> <p>The toll is immense. Mass shootings have killed 256 people and injured 1,010 more through the end of May.</p>
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HEADLINE	<b>06/02 Mexico police arrest suspect serial killer</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jun/02/mexico-alleged-serial-killer-facebook-job-offers">https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jun/02/mexico-alleged-serial-killer-facebook-job-offers</a>
GIST	Authorities in Mexico have arrested a suspected serial killer accused of luring at least seven young women on Facebook with false job offers.

Surveillance camera footage from two states showed the man meeting with the victims in public places, and in one case driving a victim away on a motorbike, officials said.

The suspect “is a serial killer of women, and there are at least seven cases of women’s killings where this person could be involved”, said assistant public safety secretary Ricardo Mejía.

Mejía said the most recent case involved the killing a 31-year-old woman in the Gulf coast state of Veracruz after she went for a job interview last month.

“Viridiana Moreno left her house in [the town of] Cardel, Veracruz, and went to the Bienvenido hotel to attend a supposed job interview she had obtained with someone on Facebook,” said Mejía. “After that she disappeared.”

Her name was made public by relatives who mounted protests after her disappearance. Her unrecognizable body was found days later, and was identified by an ID card found near the scene and by DNA testing.

Prosecutors in the central state of Morelos said on Thursday the same suspect had killed a 22-year-old student looking for work in April. Local activists said the student was lured into meeting the suspect at a cafeteria in late March by a Facebook listing for a job or articles for sale.

He then took her to a barber shop, where she was apparently killed.

Three days later, prosecutors said, her body was found: “The victim had been beaten, sexually abused and strangled.”

Protests also occurred after her disappearance. One chilling aspect was that both women disappeared after making contact with the suspect in public places with a lot of people around and had accompanied him willingly, apparently convinced by the job offers.

Prosecutors in both states mentioned finding their remains in “several places” or in various plastic bags.

The Morelos prosecutors said the man had a long string of aliases and had been sought on rape charges in 2012. They listed Juan Carlos Gasperín and Greek Román Villalobos as the two most common aliases.

The man was arrested along with a female companion in the northern state of Querétaro. It was unclear if he had a lawyer.

Authorities said he may also have been involved in cases in the states of Querétaro and Puebla.

The desperation of women needing work in small, provincial Mexican towns and Mexico’s largely under-the-table economy provides a fertile field for fake job offers.

On Thursday, authorities said they rescued two girls, ages 13 and 14, who had been lured away from home with offers of employment in the western state of Jalisco. They were found with a suspected abductor at a Mexico City bus station.

Drug cartels in Mexico have also been known to offer employment on social media sites.

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HEADLINE	<b>06/02 Police: man smashes artifacts in museum</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2022/jun/02/man-smashes-ancient-greek-artifacts-dallas-museum-police-say">https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2022/jun/02/man-smashes-ancient-greek-artifacts-dallas-museum-police-say</a>
GIST	A man broke into the Dallas Museum of Art and caused more than \$5m in damage, including smashing three ancient Greek artefacts before he was arrested, police said.

Brian Hernandez, 21, is charged with criminal mischief of more than or equal to \$300,000, which is punishable by five years to life in prison. He was booked on Thursday into the Dallas county jail with bond set at \$100,000. Jail records list no attorney for Hernandez.

According to police, Hernandez used a metal chair to break into the museum about 9.45pm on Wednesday and began a destructive rampage.

He broke into a display case and smashed a 6th century BC Greek amphora and a Greek pot dating to 450BC. Police say those two items alone were worth about \$5m. Also smashed were a bowl from 6th century BC, worth about \$100,000, and a ceramic Caddo effigy bottle valued at about \$10,000.

Building security rushed to apprehend Hernandez, who was unarmed, police said. It was not immediately known what prompted the incident.

The attack came three days after a man disguised as an elderly woman threw cake at the glass protecting the Mona Lisa in the Louvre Museum in Paris. The assault left a creamy white smear on the glass, but the Mona Lisa was not damaged.

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HEADLINE	<b>06/02 Uvalde 911 calls not communicated, shared</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2022/jun/02/uvalde-schools-police-chief-claims-cooperating-arredondo">https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2022/jun/02/uvalde-schools-police-chief-claims-cooperating-arredondo</a>
GIST	<p>The commander at the scene of a shooting at an elementary school in Uvalde, Texas, was not informed of 911 calls from students trapped inside as the massacre unfolded, a Texas state senator said.</p> <p>Roland Gutierrez said pleas for help from inside Robb elementary on 24 May did not make their way to the school district police chief, Pete Arredondo. The Democratic senator called it a “system failure” that calls to city police were not communicated to Arredondo.</p> <p>“I want to know specifically who was receiving the 911 calls,” Gutierrez said at a news conference, adding that no single person or entity was fully to blame.</p> <p>However, he said, the Texas governor, Greg Abbott, should accept much of the responsibility for the failures in the police response.</p> <p>“There was error at every level, including the legislative level. Greg Abbott has plenty of blame in all of this,” Gutierrez said.</p> <p>Nineteen children and two teachers died in the deadliest school shooting in nearly a decade. The 18-year-old gunman spent about 80 minutes inside the school and more than an hour passed from when the first officers followed him in to when he was killed by law enforcement.</p> <p>Officials have struggled to present accurate details of the event and the police response. Steven McCraw, the head of the Texas department of public safety, said Arredondo believed the school shootings had turned into hostage situation and made the “wrong decision” to not order officers to attempt to breach the classroom.</p> <p>Gutierrez said it was unclear if any details from 911 calls were shared with law enforcement officers from multiple agencies on the scene.</p> <p>“Uvalde PD was the one receiving the 911 calls for 45 minutes while ... 19 officers were sitting in a hallway,” Gutierrez said. “We don’t know if it was being communicated to those people or not.”</p> <p>But, the senator said, the commission on state emergency communications told him the school district police chief did not know.</p>

“He’s the incident commander. He did not receive [the] 911 calls,” Gutierrez said.

Arredondo has said he is talking daily with investigators, contradicting claims he has stopped cooperating. In a brief interview, he told CNN: “I’ve been on the phone with them every day.”

Earlier, Travis Considine, chief communications officer for the Texas department of public safety, said Arredondo had not responded to DPS requests for two days, while other officers in the city and schools police departments sat for interviews and provided statements.

Funerals began this week. On Wednesday the US education secretary, Miguel Cardona, attended services for the teacher Irma Garcia and her husband, Joe Garcia, who died of a heart attack two days after the shooting.

“There’s a lot of pain and a lot of hurt,” said Father Eduardo Morales, Uvalde’s only Catholic priest, last weekend before a vigil at Sacred Heart Catholic church. “But we can’t lose our faith. Faith has to be part of this journey to find comfort.”

Trey Ganem, the owner of Texas-based SoulShine Industries, designed customized caskets after consulting with victims’ families. The 19 coffins were adorned with designs including Spider-Man, dinosaurs, baseballs and TikTok. The caskets usually cost between \$3,400 and \$3,800. With some donations, Ganem’s company has paid for nearly everything.

“I didn’t even think twice when I was asked to do it [by the Texas Funeral Directors Association],” he told CNN, adding: “And God always takes care of us.

“We don’t just put a vinyl wrap on top. We actually custom paint every single one. We take the casket completely apart, and we paint the hardware, we paint the bars ... The class and the passion that we put into these is bar none,” he said.

The father of Eliahana Cruz Torres, who was killed, has been seeking temporary release from federal prison to attend his daughter’s funeral.

In a letter to Joe Biden and the Kentucky governor, Andy Beshear, a Kentucky state representative, Attica Scott, said: “According to Eliahana’s family, her father is incarcerated in a federal prison in Kentucky but he was sentenced in Del Rio, Texas, for drug trafficking and conspiracy. They further said that Eliahana and her father were only one week away from having physical contact with each other before the shooting took place.

“If Eliahana’s father’s rehabilitation record and behavior as an inmate would merit, this family would greatly appreciate him to be able to unite with them as they mourn the loss of their family member.”

The case has been taken up by Kim Kardashian, an advocate of criminal justice reform. In a tweet on Thursday, Kardashian wrote: “I ask the [Federal Bureau of Prisons] to grant Eli Torres temporary release so that he can say his goodbye to his baby girl. Every parent deserves that right.”

The school district announced that students and staff would not return to the Robb school campus, with plans to be finalized on where students would attend class in the fall.

Roland Gutierrez, the state senator, said his office was working with state and federal agencies to request upwards of \$45m in federal funding. Gutierrez also said he was unaware of plans to tear down Robb elementary but funds obtained by other schools have been used to rebuild.

On Wednesday, the Texas governor, Greg Abbott, ordered the state to conduct in-person security audits, including random, unannounced “intruder detection” visits to campuses “to find weak points and how quickly they can penetrate buildings without being stopped”.



	<p>Texas has more than 1,200 school districts.</p> <p>Abbott also asked lawmakers to make recommendations on “school safety, mental health, social media, police training, firearm safety and more”. But the governor and state lawmakers have resisted calls for stricter gun legislation. In 2021, Abbott signed a measure that allows people 21 and older to carry handguns without a license or training.</p>
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HEADLINE	<b>06/02 SPD failing take reports from rape victims</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.axios.com/local/seattle/2022/06/02/stretched-thin-seattle-cops-failing-to-take-reports-rape-victims">https://www.axios.com/local/seattle/2022/06/02/stretched-thin-seattle-cops-failing-to-take-reports-rape-victims</a>
GIST	<p>Seattle police are failing to take rape and other sexual assault reports in a timely way — or sometimes, even at all — from victims seeking treatment from Harborview Medical Center, King County's top sexual assault prosecutor told Axios Wednesday.</p> <p><b>What they're saying:</b> "Sometimes, an officer won't take a report for hours and often they won't come out to take a report at all; they may only take a report over the phone," said senior deputy prosecutor Ben Santos, chair of the Special Assault Unit for the King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Santos said he's been informed about the reporting problems directly by Harborview officials and social workers.</li> <li>• A Harborview spokesperson told Axios on Wednesday that a supervisor in charge of treating sexual assault victims was unavailable, and didn't respond further.</li> </ul> <p><b>Why it matters:</b> The delay in reporting has meant an unknown number of rape cases are falling by the wayside, as victims aren't able to report crimes or have second thoughts about reporting due to the lack of police follow-through, Santos said.</p> <p><b>Driving the news:</b> The new details from Santos came after <a href="#">The Seattle Times and KUOW jointly reported</a> Wednesday that detective staffing within the Seattle Police Department's Sexual Assault and Child Abuse Unit has been stretched so thin, it stopped assigning new cases with adult victims.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The news report is based on an internal memo sent to interim police chief Adrian Diaz on April 11 by the unit's Sgt. Pamela St. John.</li> <li>• Detectives now prioritize only a fraction of cases involving children, or those involving adults where a suspect is in custody.</li> </ul> <p><b>The big picture:</b> The unit's depleted staffing is a symptom of the department's wider staffing troubles in recent years, with the agency down more than 300 officers compared to two years ago.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• During that span, the department has shifted a larger portion of personnel to deal with more visible problems, including property crime and homeless encampment removals, per the Times/KUOW report.</li> </ul> <p><b>The other side:</b> Assistant police chief Deanna Nollette downplayed her sergeant's memo as a "gross oversimplification," telling the Times/KUOW that adult sexual assault cases are still being assigned.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SPD didn't immediately respond to Axios' request for comment specifically about Harborview.</li> <li>• Mayor Bruce Harrell's spokesperson told Axios Wednesday that officers in patrol or working to remove encampments cannot simply be moved into the unit, which requires special training.</li> <li>• Harrell's public safety initiatives, including directing Diaz to beef up patrols around "hot spots" for crime this year, have "absolutely not" diverted investigative resources from sex assault cases, the spokesperson added.</li> </ul> <p><b>Reality check:</b> Unit detectives at times have been redeployed from their regular assignments to work hot spot patrols, two department employees told Axios.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In general, "most detectives that worked on the hot spot emphasis were doing their normal work," a department spokesperson said in an email. "There was about a two-week period that each bureau sent two officers/detectives" to help with hot spot policing.</li> </ul>

	<p><b>Still, before cases</b> are ever assigned to the stretched-thin detectives, Santos said, the failure to take reports from victims at Harborview is happening in the patrol ranks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Unfortunately, we can't even do the bare minimum things now — like show up to take a report from someone who has the courage to come forward," he said.</li> </ul>
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HEADLINE	<b>06/02 SPD new plan sexual assault investigations</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.q13fox.com/news/seattle-pd-has-new-plan-to-increase-sexual-assault-investigations-slowed-by-staff-shortage">https://www.q13fox.com/news/seattle-pd-has-new-plan-to-increase-sexual-assault-investigations-slowed-by-staff-shortage</a>
GIST	<p>SEATTLE - Seattle Police Department's interim police chief said a lack of officers and detectives slowed down investigation efforts into sexual assault cases. Chief Adrian Diaz said it's an indication of just how short-staffed the entire department has become.</p> <p>"Every bureau, every section is shorter staffed. They don't have as many officers, or as many detectives doing that extra work," said Diaz. "When we have more people that we're hiring, we're able to backfill the detective positions—the sexual assault, the homicide—with good officers to help investigate those areas of work."</p> <p>He said since 2019, 402 officers and detectives left the department. The number of detectives dwindled from 234 down to 134, including those who investigate sexual assault cases.</p> <p>The interim chief said as soon as he became aware of the Sexual Assault Unit's heavy caseload in April, he immediately sought out solutions to help the unit get back on track. The department added one detective to the unit that same month.</p> <p>"And we're adding one more detective in the month of June to really help be able to address some of the backlog that we have. Because when you're short-staffed, you're still working through all the cases, but you're having to really triage every single case," said Diaz.</p> <p>According to King County prosecutors, they noticed fewer sexual assault cases were referred to their office by SPD. In April 2020, the prosecutors received 123 cases, but only 72 cases the following April.</p> <p>Diaz said as the department faces challenges retaining, recruiting and hiring staff, they're using what they have to investigate these top priority cases.</p> <p>"We've also been utilizing our Domestic Violence Unit that has very similar skills to our sexual assault detectives. And they're dealing with interviewing skills with children and families that have been in trauma," said Diaz.</p> <p>The King County Sexual Assault Resource Center said only a small fraction of victims choose to report to law enforcement. Mary Ellen Stone, CEO, said in a statement, "Those who do report tell us they often feel their experience, this crime, is not taken seriously. When victims are not given basic information about timing, options and next steps in their cases, the system is failing them."</p> <p>"I understand that there have been delays, and sometimes us making contact, but we're working through all of those challenges and we want to make sure that you have a voice and we want to make sure that your case is being heard and we are doing everything we can to bring justice," said Diaz.</p> <p>The interim chief said the department currently has a pilot program underway that includes calling victims of assault to check on them. It's a partnership with the City of Seattle's Human Resources Office and the victim outreach support group. Diaz also said SPD is ramping up collaborations with organizations like King County Sexual Assault Resource Center to offer a host of resources toward healing.</p>

	<p>"The trauma that people have from these cases, it's an emotionally draining situation and they want to have some level of accountability and justice for what happened. And so we have to make sure that we're going through every case," said Diaz.</p> <p>As for SPD's efforts in addressing its staffing issues, Diaz said they're conducting "robust" levels of retaining, recruiting and hiring.</p> <p>"We want to make sure that we streamline our hiring process so people aren't waiting through the process and getting picked up by another agency. And we are working with our executive office, our mayor's office and our city council. They've just recently looked to be able to hire a recruiting coordinator for us to be able to get more messages out to people that really want to serve," said Diaz.</p> <p>The interim chief said the department is also planning a comprehensive economic package to ensure their officers feel respected and supported.</p> <p>"It's about service, it's about trying to be dedicated to help out the community and this is what that profession brings," said Diaz.</p>
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HEADLINE	<b>06/02 Some civilians take crime-solving on own</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.q13fox.com/news/civilians-work-to-solve-crimes-but-officials-warn-this-is-not-the-answer">https://www.q13fox.com/news/civilians-work-to-solve-crimes-but-officials-warn-this-is-not-the-answer</a>
GIST	<p><b>SEATTLE</b> - People in western Washington are fed up with police responses, and in some cases, taking action into their own hands.</p> <p>In one week's time, FOX 13 News reported on several situations where citizens investigated crimes, and unfortunately, a few of them ended violently.</p> <p>About a week ago, we spoke to <a href="#">a man in West Seattle who says he is using his drone to track down stolen vehicles</a>.</p> <p>However, he says there have been a few "hairy" situations. In one instance, someone shot his drone with a BB gun.</p> <p>He says in another situation, a car he was trailing drove erratically along the shoulder and even through neighborhoods.</p> <p>FOX 13 News also reported on two incidents where people tried to get their stolen goods back on their own.</p> <p>In one situation in Tacoma, a man running for Pierce County Council tracked his stolen goods to a homeless encampment. <a href="#">He then shot at a man speeding toward him in a car</a>.</p> <p>In Puyallup, a <a href="#">man was shot in the head when he tried to chase a truck he said had his stolen motorcycle inside</a>.</p> <p>"It's just not worth it. You're possibly going to hurt yourself or someone else. Or you're going to face jail time or civil penalty from a lawsuit over stolen property," said Sgt. Darren Moss with the Pierce County Sheriff's Department.</p> <p>Officials say they understand the frustration with slow response times and police staff shortages.</p> <p>Moss says instead of investigating these crimes yourself, be a "good witness."</p> <p>"Get your evidence on the phone and call 911 and get us there as quick as we can," he said.</p>

	<p>Moss says for anyone who feels like that is not enough, consider getting involved in crime-fighting the right way.</p> <p>"There's a lot of open positions in our departments, and the more people we get back on our departments, the quicker we are able to respond," he said.</p> <p>FOX 13 News reached out to the governor's office regarding this recent "vigilante" trend, as well as the shortages in police staff, and slow response times.</p> <p>The governor's office responded in an email stating, "Everyone is aware of the unique challenges facing law enforcement with regard to vacancy rates and competitive employment between jurisdictions, but it requires long-term efforts to change those outcomes."</p>
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<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>06/02 DOC accidentally releases convicted killer</b>
<b>SOURCE</b>	<a href="https://komonews.com/news/local/convicted-killer-accidentally-released-from-western-washington-prison">https://komonews.com/news/local/convicted-killer-accidentally-released-from-western-washington-prison</a>
<b>GIST</b>	<p>ABERDEEN, Wash. — A convicted killer was accidentally released from a Western Washington prison earlier this week. A prosecutor who first handled the case scrambled to get a warrant and contact the U.S. Marshals Service, and that inmate has since been returned to custody.</p> <p>The victim's family calls the release a colossal mistake but a spokesperson for the state Department of Corrections (DOC) says they did nothing wrong.</p> <p>Jeremy Bennett pleaded guilty to killing Lawrence Howse, 54, in 2015. He was sentenced to 28 years in prison.</p> <p>However, Pierce County officials say there was a contested hearing last Friday where the court decided to resentence Bennett to account for his youth when the murder happened. Bennett was 17 at the time of the crime.</p> <p>Pierce County said it appears the DOC misinterpreted the order and released him.</p> <p>However, the DOC said it was not done in error and in fact, because his sentence was labeled as vacated, he had no more time to serve.</p> <p>A prosecutor who first handled the case scrambled to get a warrant and contacted the U.S. Marshals Service after learning of the release.</p> <p>"To me it's just wrong. You let a murderer out on the streets by mistake? There was no official order to release this man from prison," said Travis Howse, who was a teenager when his dad was shot and killed during a robbery in the parking garage of a Tacoma apartment complex in 2013.</p> <p>Police used surveillance footage to identify Bennett and Andrew Boyd as the prime suspects. Both ended up pleading guilty to murder.</p> <p>"Throughout my entire life I hold this burden with me that is a challenge and you work through it every day," Travis Howse said. "And then to get to a point 10 years later where you are forced to relive the entirety of this nightmare. It's brutal and it hard for every single person in my family."</p> <p>Deputy prosecutor Bryce Nelson, who originally handled the case, first learned of the release through a VINE notification. Nelson immediately contacted the DOC, local law enforcement, the U.S. Marshal's Service and Bennett's defense attorney. He also requested a warrant to get Bennett back into custody.</p> <p>Bennett then showed up at his attorney's office to surrender. Prosecutors said it is their understanding that Bennett and his parents told DOC officials it was a mistake to release him, but he was set free anyway.</p>

	The victim's family said they filed a complaint with the governor's office and are demanding a full-scale investigation and policy changes to keep this situation from every happening again.
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HEADLINE	<b>06/02 El Salvador crackdown, arbitrary arrests</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2022/jun/2/a-crackdown-in-el-salvador-and-fears-of-arbitrary-/">https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2022/jun/2/a-crackdown-in-el-salvador-and-fears-of-arbitrary-/</a>
GIST	<p>LA LIMONERA, El Salvador (AP) — Esmeralda Domínguez was about 100 yards from home when soldiers and police blocked her on a small bridge. The authorities had waited there for hours. Dominguez, neighbors said, was the only person they stopped.</p> <p>Her aunt, who lived nearby, protested. Dominguez was no criminal, she insisted, rattling off the community organizations her niece led or was involved in. It didn't matter.</p> <p>"We know what we're doing," a soldier told the aunt before loading the young woman into a truck. It rumbled off, leaving her black motorcycle beside the road.</p> <p>That was April 19. No one in her family has seen her since.</p> <p>Over the past 10 weeks, El Salvador's security forces have arrested more than 36,000 people since the congress granted President Nayib Bukele the power to suspend some civil liberties to pursue powerful street gangs. Lawmakers extended those powers by another 30 days last week as public opinion polls showed broad popular support.</p> <p>However, a growing number of the arrests - like Dominguez's - appear arbitrary or unjustified, human rights groups allege.</p> <p>Cristosal, a nongovernmental organization, has documented more than 500 cases of arbitrary arrests since the state of exception was imposed March 27, according to its director Noah Bullock. Amnesty International said Thursday that its investigators found that thousands of people had been arrested without legal requirements being met.</p> <p>Bukele sought the expanded powers after El Salvador's street gangs killed dozens of people in late March. Two weeks into the mass detentions, the president acknowledged that there could be an "error" of 1% of those arrested not having any ties to the gangs. Even that seemingly small number suggests authorities are not making arrests based on investigations, critics say. His office declined to comment.</p> <p>Now, under the new powers, authorities do not have to give a reason to those being arrested. Detainees can be held 15 days without seeing a judge and without access to lawyers.</p> <p>When those arrested do finally get a lawyer, the public defender's office is overwhelmed. Tens of thousands of new cases have piled atop the existing caseloads of only about 250 public defenders nationwide.</p> <p>Domínguez's family and some 50 others in the area appear to be among the first to organize in an effort to free their relatives. The families have made filings with the courts known as habeas corpus, which order that someone in custody be brought before a court and places the burden of proof on the government. Cristosal has been helping with many of those cases, including Domínguez's.</p> <p>The most common crime attributed to those arrested, including Domínguez, is illegal association for allegedly belonging to a gang. Judges have been practically automatic in ordering arrestees held for six months at the request of prosecutors despite little or no supporting evidence, according to a Cristosal report. Judges have ordered nearly 26,000 people held in jail, prosecutors say.</p> <p>In April, a police union said that some commanders under pressure to meet arrest quotas were pushing their officers to do anything necessary to make arrests, including giving false statements tying people to</p>

gangs. And last month, three police agents were arrested when they went to collect money they had demanded in exchange for not arresting someone.

Just hours before Domínguez was detained, Bukele wrote on Twitter - above photos of shirtless gang members with faces and torsos blanketed in tattoos - that authorities had arrested more than 13,000 “terrorists.” Those following the president’s social media feed would not imagine Domínguez - a mother of two, including a 4-month-old daughter - would soon figure in the soaring arrest tally.

José Lazo Romero, a lawyer with the Brother Mercedes Ruíz Foundation, a Christian social justice organization with which Dominguez worked, said he knew of at least 15 cases similar to hers in the area, including three young men arrested on their way home after playing soccer and a disabled person taken away by authorities.

“It’s said that he who has nothing to hide has nothing to fear,” Lazo said. “Now people who precisely have nothing to hide fear being arrested, fear being taken to jail, being sent to prison.”

Advocates say the vast majority of those arrested come from poor, marginalized communities. The pain is doubly felt by their families, because those arrested were often the breadwinners.

Domínguez was not the first member of her household arrested. Sergio Santos, a farm laborer, her longtime partner and the father of her 4-month-old daughter, was arrested April 9 by police who came to the family’s home and asked Domínguez’s mother, María Dolores García, how many men and women lived there. They told her to wake Santos. She said they had a list of names, looked at his ID, said, “‘that’s you,’ and handcuffed him.”

Domínguez began daily rounds to the police, to the jail, trying to get information. She was well known in the community and had worked alongside officers at the local police station on a youth program to prevent violence. Her mother said her work hadn’t put her in contact with gang members.

The day she ran into the police, Domínguez had tried to deliver food to Santos and found he’d been transferred to a prison in the capital. Then she, too, was gone.

Security Minister Gustavo Villatoro said, requesting the extension, that the government wants to eradicate the gangs. “This war,” he said, “is going to continue for as long as necessary and to the extent that the public continues to demand it.”

In a court hearing on May 2, where dozens of detainees were arraigned en masse. The judge ordered Domínguez to six more months of pre-trial detention.

In the arraignments that Cristosal has witnessed, judges face anywhere from 50 to more than 500 detainees at once.

“The evidence being brought against these people are what we would describe as general statistics, not necessarily any information that links individuals to criminal activity,” said Bullock, Cristosal’s director.

“There is a very uncertain future for people who are in this black hole of a justice system,” he said.

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HEADLINE	06/02 Police: Tulsa shooter targeted doctor
SOURCE	<a href="https://apnews.com/article/tulsa-oklahoma-texas-school-shootings-61bba0dcf04e2f8dbc34ec4ee7fd02b0">https://apnews.com/article/tulsa-oklahoma-texas-school-shootings-61bba0dcf04e2f8dbc34ec4ee7fd02b0</a>
GIST	<p>A man who blamed his surgeon for continuing pain after a recent back operation bought an AR-style rifle and <a href="#">opened fire hours later at a Tulsa medical office</a>, killing the doctor and three other people in an attack that ended with him taking his own life, police said Thursday.</p> <p>The gunman called the clinic repeatedly complaining of pain and specifically targeted the doctor who performed the surgery, Tulsa Police Chief Wendell Franklin said.</p>



That physician, Dr. Preston Phillips, was killed Wednesday, along with Dr. Stephanie Husen, receptionist Amanda Glenn and patient William Love, police said. The attack occurred on the campus of Saint Francis Health System in Tulsa. The chief identified the shooter as Michael Louis, 45, of Muskogee, Oklahoma.

It was the latest in a series of mass shootings in United States including the [deadly school shooting](#) in Uvalde, Texas, and an [attack on a supermarket](#) in Buffalo, New York.

Louis carried a letter that said he was targeting Phillips, Franklin said. The letter “made it clear that he came in with the intent to kill Dr. Phillips and anyone who got in his way,” Franklin said. “He blamed Dr. Phillips for the ongoing pain following the surgery.”

A phone number listed for an address for a Michael Louis in Muskogee was not working Thursday.

Phillips was an orthopedic surgeon with an interest in spinal surgery and joint reconstruction, according to a profile on the clinic’s website. He once served as lead physician for Tulsa’s WNBA team before the franchise moved out of state, according to the Tulsa World.

Dr. Cliff Robertson, president and CEO of Saint Francis Health System, called Phillips a “consummate gentleman” and “a man that we should all strive to emulate.” He said the three employees who were killed were “the three best people in the entire world” and that they “didn’t deserve to die this way.”

Police believe Louis bought his weapons legally, Franklin said. Louis bought an AR-style semi-automatic rifle on the afternoon of the shooting and a handgun on Sunday, the police chief said.

Franklin praised the law enforcement officers, 911 operators and emergency for their “immediate response” to the attack Wednesday. Police responded to the call about three minutes after dispatchers received the report at 4:52 p.m. and made contact with the gunman at 5:01 p.m., authorities said Wednesday.

“Our training led us to take immediate action without hesitation,” he said. “That’s exactly what officers do and that’s what they did in this instance.”

The length of time it took police officers in Uvalde, Texas, to engage the gunman during last week’s deadly school shooting at Robb Elementary School has become a key focus of that investigation. Officers waited over an hour to breach the classroom where the 18-year-old gunman attacked with an AR-style semi-automatic rifle, killing [19 children and two teachers](#).

Democratic leaders have amplified their calls for greater restrictions on guns since the Uvalde shooting, while Republicans are emphasizing more security at schools. The divide mirrors a partisan split that has [stymied action in Congress and many state capitols](#) over how best to respond to a [record-high number of gun-related deaths](#) in the U.S.

Oklahoma House Democrats on Thursday called for a special session to consider gun safety legislation, but that’s unlikely to happen in a GOP-controlled Legislature that has been pushing for years to loosen firearms restrictions.

Republican Gov. Kevin Stitt, who is running for reelection, said last week after the Texas shooting that it was too soon to talk about firearms policy. A pro-firearms group, the Oklahoma 2nd Amendment Association, is an [influential force at the state Capitol](#), and the first bill Stitt [signed into law](#) after taking office in 2019 was a measure that allows most adults to openly carry firearms without the previously required background check or training.

The shooting Wednesday also comes just more than two weeks after [shooting at a Buffalo supermarket](#) by a white man who is accused of [killing 10 Black people in a racist attack](#). The recent Memorial Day



	<p>weekend saw <a href="#">multiple mass shootings nationwide</a>, including at an <a href="#">outdoor festival in Taft</a>, Oklahoma, 45 miles from Tulsa, even as single-death incidents accounted for most gun fatalities.</p> <p>Since January, there have been 12 shootings where four or more people have been killed, according to The Associated Press/USA TODAY/Northeastern University mass killing database. Those shootings have left 76 dead, including 31 adults and children in Buffalo and Texas, the database says. The death toll does not include the suspects in the shootings.</p>
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HEADLINE	<b>06/02 Weinstein sex crimes convictions upheld</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.cnn.com/2022/06/02/us/harvey-weinstein-appeal-ruling/index.html">https://www.cnn.com/2022/06/02/us/harvey-weinstein-appeal-ruling/index.html</a>
GIST	<p><a href="#">Harvey Weinstein's criminal sex act and rape convictions</a> have been upheld by a New York appellate court.</p> <p>All appellate judges concurred in the opinion.</p> <p>In a statement, Weinstein spokesperson Juda Engelmayer said his legal team was “disappointed, but not surprised.”</p> <p>“We are reviewing all of our options and will seek to petition the court appeals and beyond.”</p> <p>Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg in a statement expressed gratitude for a decision upholding “a monumental conviction that changed the way prosecutors and courts approach complex prosecutions of sexual predators.”</p> <p>Weinstein’s appeal was filed last April, about one year after he was convicted of first-degree criminal sexual act and third-degree rape. He is serving a 23-year prison sentence.</p> <p>In a motion filed last year, Weinstein’s attorneys argued the disgraced Hollywood mogul’s 2020 conviction should be reversed because his trial was tainted for several reasons, most notably a biased judge and juror.</p> <p>Weinstein still faces trial in Los Angeles for <a href="#">additional criminal charges related to the alleged sexual assault of multiple women</a>. He has pleaded not guilty.</p> <p>An attorney for Weinstein argued the appeal in a hearing before a panel of New York State appeals court judges in December, saying one juror who had written a book that involved “predatory men” misled the court about the book’s contents and should have been dismissed.</p> <p>Assistant Manhattan District Attorney Valerie Figueredo argued the book did not relate to the conduct Weinstein was accused of.</p> <p>“It simply did not demonstrate that she had any type of bias or a state of mind that rendered her incapable of issuing a fair and impartial verdict,” Figueredo told the five judges for the Appellate Division of the First Judicial Department of the Supreme Court of the State of New York.</p> <p>Weinstein attorney Barry Kamins also argued trial jurors were overwhelmed by “bad evidence” that should not have been admitted by the judge.</p> <p>“This was a trial of his character,” Kamins said, adding later, “I don’t think there’s been a case, that I can recall, where the piling on has been as evident as it was in this case.”</p> <p>Weinstein has maintained his innocence and denied all allegations against him since they first emerged, sparking the #MeToo movement and encouraging women to speak out and share their own experiences with sexual abuse and misconduct.</p>

	In the New York case, he was ultimately convicted largely based on testimony by Miriam Haley and Jessica Mann. Haley testified that Weinstein forcibly performed oral sex on her in 2006 at his Manhattan apartment, and Mann testified that he raped her in 2013 during what she described as an abusive relationship. He was found not guilty of predatory sexual assault and one count of first-degree rape.
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HEADLINE	<b>06/02 Iowa shooting outside church</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.weareiowa.com/article/news/local/ames-shooting-cornerstone-church-salt-company-updates/524-c4009e10-ebdd-4a08-94c4-08fd13a316cd">https://www.weareiowa.com/article/news/local/ames-shooting-cornerstone-church-salt-company-updates/524-c4009e10-ebdd-4a08-94c4-08fd13a316cd</a>
GIST	<p>AMES, Iowa — A shooting outside of <a href="#">Cornerstone Church</a> Thursday along Highway 30 just outside of Ames has left three people dead, including the shooter, according to the Story County Sheriff's Office.</p> <p>Local 5's Jon Diaz spoke with the agency Thursday evening.</p> <p>At about 6:51 p.m., several law enforcement agencies received calls about a shooter and two victims in the church's parking lot. The alleged shooter, identified as a man, died from a self-inflicted gunshot wound. The victims were identified as women, the sheriff's office said.</p> <p>Law enforcement is currently speaking with witnesses inside the church and clearing the scene of the shooting. They're also working to provide resources to immediate family members impacted.</p> <p>There were people in the church when the shooting happened. Authorities confirmed those who were inside at the time of the shooting are safe.</p> <p>Local 5's Laryssa Leone and Reina Garcia observed officers speaking with witnesses at the scene. Patrol cars are placed at the front entrance of the Crossroads Baptist Church to block off traffic.</p> <p><a href="#">The Story County Sheriff's Office</a> will give an update on the shooting Friday morning at 10:30 from their office in Nevada.</p> <p>A <a href="#">statement from Cornerstone Church Thursday night</a> reads as follows:</p> <p><i>"Tonight, a tragic shooting occurred involving two young members of our Cornerstone Church community. It is believed that an adult male shot these two victims and then took his own life. Due to the ongoing investigation, we are not able to give any details at this time.</i></p> <p><i>"We can say, however, that we are more than saddened by the events that transpired. Our hearts break for all involved, and we are praying for everyone affected, especially the family of the victims. Our Ministry staff are available to support all those impacted, and we will continue to fully cooperate with authorities as they complete their full investigation."</i></p> <p><i>"We sincerely appreciate the responsiveness of the Story County Sheriff's Department, Ames PD, and all Law Enforcement Officials who have handled this matter with exceptional professionalism and compassion. Please join us in praying for all affected and their families.</i></p> <p><i>"Psalm 34:18 says, 'The Lord is near to the brokenhearted.' Right now, we are brokenhearted and we need God to draw near to us."</i></p> <p>The church will host a prayer service Friday at 10 a.m. and all are welcome to attend, according to the church's post.</p> <p><a href="#">Iowa State University leadership</a> released a statement Thursday night as well:</p> <p><i>"Dear Iowa State Community,</i></p> <p><i>We are saddened to learn of the shooting that occurred this evening, June 2, in the parking lot of Cornerstone Church in Ames. We know many in our campus community attend services and are members of the church.</i></p> <p><i>This is a tragic loss and our condolences are with the families and friends of the victims. As we wait to learn more about what happened, we ask that everyone extend care and compassion to one another."</i></p>

**What else we know:**

- The incident happened shortly before 7 p.m.
- The shooter, a man, died from a self-inflicted gunshot wound.
- The two victims are women.
- [Cornerstone Church is located along Highway 30](#), just southeast of Ames.
- The Ames Police Department directed Local 5 to the Story County Sheriff's Office since the incident happened in their jurisdiction.
- The sheriff's office will provide an update on the shooting Friday at 10:30 a.m.
- Cornerstone Church hosts [The Salt Company](#), an Iowa State University ministry that meets every Thursday night.
- Thursday night marked the start of the ministry's "Summer Salt" sermons. The event was scheduled to begin at 7 p.m., [according to the group's Facebook page](#).

**What we don't know:**

- It remains unclear if the gunman had any type of relationship with the victims prior to the shooting.
- It remains unclear if the gunman had any past history with the church.
- The motive remains unclear. Local 5 cannot confirm if the shooter targeted anyone.
- The identities of the victims and the shooter are unknown. This is something Local 5 anticipates will be confirmed by law enforcement after family members are notified.

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HEADLINE	<b>06/02 Police fatally shoot Texas fugitive</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://abcnews.go.com/US/wireStory/fugitive-suspected-taking-truck-found-dead-85151243">https://abcnews.go.com/US/wireStory/fugitive-suspected-taking-truck-found-dead-85151243</a>
GIST	<p>CENTERVILLE, Texas -- A convicted murderer on the run since escaping a prison bus after stabbing its driver last month was shot dead by law enforcement late Thursday after he killed a family of five and stole their truck from a rural weekend cabin, a Texas prison system spokesman said.</p> <p>Gonzalo Lopez, 46, was killed about 10:30 p.m. Thursday in Jourdan, Texas, about 35 miles (55 kilometers) south of San Antonio, said Jason Clark, spokesman for the Texas Department of Criminal Justice.</p> <p>"Law enforcement in Atascosa County located the stolen vehicle, disabled it with spike strips, and gunfire ensued," Clark said in a statement. No officers were injured, he said.</p> <p>Lopez was killed about 220 miles (354 kilometers) southeast of Centerville, Texas, where Clark earlier said Lopez had killed a Houston family of five at their cabin and stole their pickup truck.</p> <p>Lopez was thought to be hiding in the vicinity of the cabin when officers received a call from someone concerned after not hearing from an elderly relative, Clark said.</p> <p>Officers went to the family's cabin along Texas Route 7 west of Centerville about 6 p.m. Thursday and found the bodies of one adult and four minors, three of them children. Identities were not released, but gone was their white pickup truck, Clark said. Lopez was believed to have driven the truck from the search area, he said. Lopez was a former member of the Mexican Mafia prison gang and had ties to South Texas, he said.</p> <p>The family was thought to have arrived Thursday morning at the cabin, which they owned, Clark said. The five are believed to have been killed Thursday afternoon and had no link to Lopez, he said.</p> <p>Lopez, 46, had been the subject of an intensive search since his escape from the prison bus. He was being transported in a caged area of the bus from a prison in Gatesville, more than 100 miles (160 kilometers) west of the place where he escaped, to one in Huntsville for a medical appointment when he escaped in Leon County, a rural area between Dallas and Houston, the Texas Department of Criminal Justice has said.</p>

	<p>Centerville is the county seat of Leon County, which has roughly 16,000 residents and is about 50 miles (80 kilometers) north of the state's Huntsville prison headquarters.</p> <p>The department has said Lopez somehow freed himself from his hand and leg restraints, cut through the expanded metal of the cage and crawled from the bottom. He then attacked the driver, who stopped the bus and got into an altercation with Lopez, and they both eventually got off the bus.</p> <p>A second officer at the rear of the bus then exited and approached Lopez, who got back on the bus and started driving down the road, the department said.</p> <p>The officers fired at Lopez and disabled the bus by shooting the rear tire, the department said. The bus then traveled a short distance before leaving the roadway, where Lopez got out and ran into the woods.</p> <p>At some point during the escape, Lopez stabbed the driver, whose wounds weren't life-threatening, the department said.</p> <p>Lopez was serving a life prison sentence for a 2006 conviction of murdering a man along the Texas-Mexico border.</p>
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HEADLINE	<b>06/02 'Door' teacher traumatized, heartbroken</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://abcnews.go.com/US/uvalde-teacher-officials-mistakenly-left-door-open-traumatized/story?id=85149742">https://abcnews.go.com/US/uvalde-teacher-officials-mistakenly-left-door-open-traumatized/story?id=85149742</a>
GIST	<p>A teacher at Robb Elementary School has been traumatized and heartbroken since Texas officials incorrectly made initial statements claiming she left a door propped open that the Uvalde gunman used to enter the building before carrying out last week's mass shooting, her lawyer told ABC News in an interview Thursday.</p> <p>"It's traumatic for her when it's insinuated that she's involved, the door open," attorney Don Flanary, who represents the Robb Elementary School teacher, told ABC News correspondent Marcus Moore in an exclusive interview. "She's heartbroken."</p> <p>Flanary told ABC News that prior to the shooting, the teacher walked out the door to retrieve food from a colleague outside, where she saw the gunman crash a gray Ford pickup truck, then exit the vehicle and head her way, toward the school, armed with a gun.</p> <p>"She sees him throw a bag over the fence and he has the weapon, the gun, around his chest," Flanary said. "He hops the fence and starts running at her."</p> <p>Flanary said the teacher then "immediately turns and she runs inside, kicks the rock out, slams the door."</p> <p>Back inside the school, Flanary said, she heard gunshots.</p> <p>"She thought she was going to die herself. She was waiting for him to come in," Flanary said. "Obviously she's heartbroken with all the lives lost."</p> <p>At a press conference after the shooting, Steven McCraw, director of the Texas Department of Public Safety, said that the teacher had left the door propped open prior to the gunman entering the school.</p> <p>"The teacher runs to the room, 132, to retrieve a phone, and that same teacher walks back to the exit door and the door remains propped open," McCraw said at a press conference last Friday.</p> <p>But just days later the claim was walked back. Texas Department of Public Safety press secretary Ericka Miller confirmed to ABC News that investigators had determined that the teacher had closed the door -- but the door did not lock.</p>

	<p>Law enforcement is looking into why the door failed to lock, DPS confirmed to ABC News.</p> <p>In the meantime, the teacher's attorney told ABC News that his office is filing a petition for information about Daniel Defense, the company that made the assault weapon used in the attack.</p> <p>"We can't bring the kids back, but we can find out who's responsible. We need to find the people who put the guns in his hands responsible," he said.</p>
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HEADLINE	<b>06/02 Disturbing new pattern: young assailants</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/02/us/politics/mass-shootings-young-men-guns.html">https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/02/us/politics/mass-shootings-young-men-guns.html</a>
GIST	<p>WASHINGTON — The two young men accused of carrying out the massacres in Buffalo and Uvalde followed a familiar path: They legally bought semiautomatic rifles right after turning 18, posted images intended to display their strength and menace — and then turned those weapons on innocent people.</p> <p>As investigators and researchers determine how the tragedies unfolded, the age of the accused has emerged as a key factor in understanding how two teenagers became driven to acquire such deadly firepower and how it led them to mass shootings.</p> <p>They fit in a critical age range — roughly 15 to 25 — that law enforcement officials, researchers and policy experts consider a hazardous crossroads for young men, a period when they are in the throes of developmental changes and societal pressures that can turn them toward violence in general, and, in the rarest cases, mass shootings.</p> <p>Six of the nine deadliest mass shootings in the United States since 2018 were by people who were 21 or younger, representing a shift for mass casualty shootings, which before 2000 were most often initiated by men in their mid-20s, 30s and 40s.</p> <p>“We see two clusters when it comes to mass shooters, people in their 40s who commit workplace type shootings, and a very big cluster of young people — 18, 19, 20, 21 — who seem to get caught up in the social contagion of killing,” said Jillian Peterson, a criminal justice professor who helped found <a href="#">the Violence Project</a>, which maintains a comprehensive national database of mass shootings.</p> <p>There is no single, easy explanation for why young men are more likely to engage in mass shootings. (Girls and women make up a small percentage of all perpetrators.) But many of the causes cited most often by law enforcement officials and academics seem intuitive — online bullying, the increasingly aggressive marketing of guns to boys, lax state gun laws and federal statutes that make it legal to buy a semiautomatic “long gun” at 18.</p> <p>The shootings come against a backdrop of <a href="#">a worsening adolescent mental health crisis</a>, one that predated the pandemic but has been intensified by it. Much of the despair among teenagers and young adults has been inwardly directed, with <a href="#">soaring rates</a> of self-harm and suicide. In that sense, the perpetrators of mass shootings represent an extreme minority of young people, but one that nonetheless exemplifies broader trends of loneliness, hopelessness and the darker side of a culture saturated by social media and violent content.</p> <p>In addition to <a href="#">Buffalo</a> and <a href="#">Uvalde, Texas</a>, there was a mass shooting at supermarket in Boulder, Colo., in March 2021 that the police said was carried out by a 21-year-old man; a massacre by what authorities said was a 21-year-old gunman targeting Hispanic shoppers at a Walmart in El Paso in August 2019 that resulted in 23 deaths; a school shooting in Santa Fe, Texas, in which a 17-year-old student is accused of killing eight students and two teachers in May 2018; and the killing of 17 people at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Fla., in February 2018 by a 19-year-old former student.</p> <p>Only two of the 30 deadliest mass shootings recorded from 1949 to 2017 involved gunmen younger than 21: The first was the massacre of 13 people by two teenagers at Columbine High School in 1999, and the</p>

second came when a 20-year-old killed 27 people, most of them children, at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Conn., in 2012.

A shooting on Wednesday in Tulsa, Okla., in which a gunman killed four people and wounded several more before apparently taking his own life, defied the recent pattern. The police said they believed that the gunman, whom they had not identified, was between 35 and 40 years old.

Frank T. McAndrew, a Knox College psychology professor who studies mass shootings, said almost all of the young killers he has researched were motivated by a need to prove themselves.

“These are young guys who feel like losers, and they have an overwhelming drive to show everybody they are not on the bottom,” he said. “In the case of the Buffalo shooter, it was about trying to impress this community of racists he had cultivated online. In the case of the kid in Uvalde, it was about going back to the place where you felt disrespected and acting out violently.”

Ms. Peterson added: “And since Columbine, they have tended to study and emulate each other. It’s a growing problem.”

In almost every case, social media or interactive online game platforms played some role, mirroring the ubiquity of online youth culture over the past two decades.

In the late 1990s, at the dawn of the social media age, one of the gunmen at Columbine created a blog on AOL to detail his violent thoughts.

The 22-year-old college student who murdered six people in Santa Barbara, Calif., in 2014 offered one of the most direct expressions of a gunman’s mentality in a video posted on YouTube: The gun, he said, gave him a sense of power.

The Buffalo gunman, emulating the 28-year-old anti-Muslim terrorist who massacred 51 people in Christchurch, New Zealand, three years ago, live streamed himself as he methodically killed shoppers because they were Black. The man charged with the killings in Uvalde used Yubo, a relatively new platform, to share menacing messages in which he seemed to telegraph his plans.

“It’s a way for kids to flex,” said Titania Jordan, with Bark Technologies, an online safety company that monitors the use of platforms for violent content. “It’s a way for them to show strength if they are bullied, or left out. It’s just a part of the narrative now in all these cases — there’s always a social media component.”

There is also a biological one. Scientists have long known the teenage and post-teenage period is a critical time for brain development and a time, for most teenage boys, often characterized by aggressive and impulsive behavior. Girls of the same age, by contrast, have greater control over their impulses and emotions.

Overall, boys and young men account for half of all homicides involving guns, or any other weapon, nationwide, a percentage that has been steadily rising. Exactly 50 percent of all killings in 2020, the last year comprehensive data is available, were committed by assailants under 30, [according to the F.B.I.’s uniform crime data tracking system](#).

Mass shootings, defined by most experts as involving the deaths of more than four people, are rare; shootings on the scale of Buffalo and Uvalde, with more than 10 victims, are even less common. [Around 99 percent](#) of all shootings in the country involve fewer victims, are the result of crime or personal disputes, and are motivated drug activity, gang conflict, domestic violence and personal disputes, according to statistics compiled by the federal government and academic.



“Why are a disproportionate number of crimes committed by males in their late teens and early 20s?” asked Laurence Steinberg, a professor of psychology and neuroscience at Temple University who has worked extensively on issues involving adolescent brain development.

The explanation, he said, includes the increasingly well-understood neurobiology of the teenage years. During adolescence, a “huge mismatch” develops between parts of the brain that cause impulsive behavior and emotional sensitivity and other parts of the brain that regulate acting out on such impulses, Dr. Steinberg said. Men, he added, tend typically to have an even higher, faster peak in arousal, while women see a higher peak in regulation at an earlier age — and therefore “at every age, males are more sensation-seeking.”

The height of that mismatch tends to be in the late teens or early 20s. “Then the regulatory systems start to catch up to the impulses, and you’ve got this gradual improvement in ability to control thoughts, emotions and behaviors ongoing into the early 20s,” Dr. Steinberg added.

The changes in brain development are accompanied by the disorienting societal passage from boy to man, with all the turbulence that entails even in healthy boys. There are “major differences in socialization for males and females related to aggressive behavior, appropriate ways to seek support, how to display emotions and acceptability of firearm use,” said Sara Johnson, a professor of pediatrics at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine.

Young men are “almost universally” in transition “in their relationships, living situations, lifestyles, education, occupation,” while “at the same time they have substantial autonomy from the adults in their lives and may find themselves negotiating with little support or supervision,” Dr. Johnson said.

Yet what differentiates mass killers from other young men who do not act on these impulses is hard to define, and even harder to counter: madness.

Still, the vast majority of young men with mental health disorders, even serious ones, never commit acts of violence. They are more likely to be victims, or impulsively hurt themselves, than to painstakingly plot violence against others.

Republicans, countering Democratic calls for tightened gun controls, have seized on improving school safety and upgrading mental health services after the recent massacres.

Conservatives are also resisting efforts by congressional Democrats to raise the legal age to buy a semiautomatic rifle from 18 to 21. A Republican-appointed federal judge recently struck down California’s attempt to increase the age. The state enlisted Dr. Steinberg and other experts to make the scientific case for keeping such weapons out of the hands of teenagers.

Their arguments did not prevail. “America would not exist without the heroism of the young adults who fought and died in our revolutionary army,” Judge Ryan Nelson, speaking for [a two-to-one majority](#) in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, wrote in an opinion released on May 11, three days before the rampage in Buffalo.

With few policy safeguards, mental health professionals and local authorities have been left to spot and stop potential gunmen, with uneven success.

In 2018, the police [arrested two boys](#), 13 and 14, after receiving a tip just before the anniversary of the Columbine shooting. The teenagers were planning to target a school in Uvalde and wanted to rob a neighbor’s house to obtain weapons. The suspect in the Uvalde massacre was not involved in that plot.

Over the years, Jill H. Rathus, a therapist in Great Neck, N.Y., has seen her share of young men who seemed to be a danger to themselves or others, including one whose mother feared her son would become a gunman. He did not.



	<p>Dr. Rathus and other experts cautioned that there were vast differences between suicidal and homicidal behavior, but she also said she saw some overlap in certain feelings that contributed to growing acts of violence directed at self and at others. “There’s an incredible sense of aching despair plus hopelessness, and then there’s a sense of a lack of meaningful connections,” Dr. Rathus said. “Then there’s access to lethal means, that’s the center.”</p> <p>In 2006, Dr. McAndrew, the Knox College psychology professor, and two of his colleagues <a href="#">set out to test</a> the effect of guns on the behavior of young men, monitoring the testosterone levels, and signs of aggression, in 30 male college students when they were given a children’s toy and an actual firearm.</p> <p>“The presence of a gun changed their behavior significantly,” he said. “Just holding a gun gave you guts.”</p>
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HEADLINE	<b>06/01 SPD halts adult sex assault investigations</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/times-watchdog/seattle-police-halted-investigating-adult-sexual-assaults-this-year-internal-memo-shows/">https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/times-watchdog/seattle-police-halted-investigating-adult-sexual-assaults-this-year-internal-memo-shows/</a>
GIST	<p>Seattle police’s sexual assault and child abuse unit staff has been so depleted that it stopped assigning to detectives this year new cases with adult victims, according to <a href="#">an internal memo</a> sent to interim police Chief Adrian Diaz in April.</p> <p>The unit’s sergeant put her staffing crisis in stark terms.</p> <p>“The community expects our agency to respond to reports of sexual violence,” Sgt. Pamela St. John wrote, “and at current staffing levels that objective is unattainable.”</p> <p>Law enforcement agencies here and across the country have grappled with labor shortages during the pandemic and since the 2020 protests following the murder of George Floyd. But Seattle’s failure to staff its sexual assault unit stands out from other local police departments and raises questions about the Seattle Police Department’s priorities, advocates say.</p> <p>The memo, sent April 11, emerged amid a wave of new political promises for policing in Seattle. Last fall, Seattle voters elected a new mayor who rejected calls to defund the police and campaigned on a platform to clear public spaces of homeless encampments and strengthen public safety.</p> <p>Behind the scenes, police leaders confronting an ongoing staffing crisis shored up patrol and positions that respond to homeless encampments, while some investigative units shrunk.</p> <p>Now the department’s lack of attention to its sexual assault unit is threatening the viability of cases, as delayed investigations and evidence collection possibly hinder their outcomes.</p> <p>In the memo, St. John went on to say that she was not “able to assign adult sexual assault cases” that came into her unit. Cases involving children and adult cases that had a suspect in custody — a fraction of adult sexual assaults reported to police — were being prioritized. The unit just had too few detectives.</p> <p>Those concerns bear out in fewer referrals from the sexual assault unit to prosecutors. King County prosecutors say they’ve communicated with the sexual assault unit about understaffing concerns, but little has changed.</p> <p>Assistant Chief Deanna Nollette in an interview with The Seattle Times and KUOW this week dismissed St. John’s portrayal of what was happening in her unit as “not accurate” and a “gross oversimplification.”</p> <p>“Sexual assault cases are still being assigned, but the workload is being triaged based on a number of factors that we would traditionally use to triage those cases,” Nollette said.</p>

Nollette emphasized that staffing shortages were being felt across the department. She did not provide an up-to-date count of how many adult sexual assault cases were on hold, although detectives in the unit are keeping a list with dozens of cases.

Other political leaders expressed skepticism at the idea that departmentwide understaffing was to blame for the sexual assault unit's predicament.

Sen. Manka Dhingra, D-Redmond, a senior deputy King County prosecutor who has led efforts in the Legislature to improve treatment of sexual assault victims, said the sexual assault unit's problems were about priorities, not adequate staffing.

"I cannot really tell you how pissed I am about this," Dhingra said. "Because it is completely unacceptable. This is 2022. We should not be having this conversation about allocating resources for survivors."

### **A starved sexual assault unit**

The staffing crisis at the Seattle Police Department is not new.

The department has been losing officers since the beginning of 2020, and staff levels plummeted to a new low at the end of 2021. Whereas 2020 began with 1,290 officers in service, by March 2022 those numbers dropped to 968 — well below the department's own projections and what the city expected to spend on salaries.

Nollette defended the sexual assault unit's low staff numbers, saying units across the department felt the impact of the losses. The sexual assault unit wasn't even the most affected, she said.

"I could bring anybody in here from anywhere in the department and they would tell you the same story," Nollette said.

Seattle police staffing numbers presented to the Seattle City Council on April 26 show that the reductions in the workforce have not been felt evenly across the department.

According to council central staff, the percent of the force in operations support — which includes training and personnel on extended leave — and the patrol division has increased while investigative units have thinned. Diaz explained that maintaining patrol numbers wasn't just important for trying to control 911 response times, but also for taking in reports of rape and sexual assault.

"If we don't have an officer to respond to sexual assault, we're never going to have the followup to be able to investigate it," Diaz told the council. "So I've tried to make sure we've maintained our patrol staffing levels."

At the top of the department's priorities for investigating adult sexual assault cases are those with suspects in custody, according to an internal response to St. John's memo — a small portion of the cases the unit typically sees.

Now, the unit maintains a list of new adult sexual assault cases it's simply unable to investigate for lack of detectives, according to internal communications at the department obtained by KUOW.

Currently, the sexual assault unit has five detectives to respond to sexual assault and child abuse reports for the entire city, which has had 225 sex offenses reported so far this year, according to the department's crime data. Yet other units that don't investigate violent crime have more staff.

The department's Alternative Response Team — the unit that responds to homeless encampment removals — is now staffed by twice the number of officers on the sexual assault unit after an additional seven patrol officers were added to the unit this year. The department's general investigations unit, which investigates

property crime, has 12 detectives. Far more property crimes are reported to Seattle police each year than sexual assault, but they are simpler to investigate.

“When you have businesses that are the single biggest loss leaders in the country telling you, ‘We are going to close our businesses and leave the city of Seattle’ if we don’t do something about the crime, we have a responsibility as a department to try to do what we can do to support them with policing,” Nollette said.

The department has allowed investigative units, including the sexual assault unit, to fall from 16% of the total sworn force in 2020 to 14% currently, while the proportion of police in areas including patrol, leadership and operations support has increased.

The understaffing in the sexual assault unit has drained the morale of its employees, most of whom are overworked and burned out, according to a detective in the unit who requested anonymity because SPD policy prohibited them from speaking with the media. While detectives struggle to make a dent in large child abuse and sexual assault caseloads, the department has also drafted them to work security and traffic control at sporting events.

Sgt. St. John wrote the memo after [a KUOW story in April](#) that showed Seattle police were investigating few adult sexual assault cases while struggling to meet the demand required by law to quickly resolve cases involving children. St. John declined to comment for this story.

At the time St. John wrote the memo, 30 adult cases were waiting to be assigned to detectives, and 116 alerts showing that identifiable DNA from rape kits had been uploaded to a federal database and needed attention, St. John wrote to Diaz.

The sexual assault unit had historically been staffed with 10 to 12 detectives, St. John wrote, but that the unit could start chipping away at the backlog of adult sexual assault cases with eight.

Mayor Bruce Harrell declined to be interviewed for this story, though mayoral spokesperson Jamie Housen said that a detective had been added to the sexual assault unit this year.

“Mayor Harrell has been unequivocal that SPD needs more officers to ensure specialty units are well staffed so that investigations are completed swiftly and thoroughly,” Housen said by email.

Since St. John’s April 11 memo, detectives have started to receive assignments for new cases with adult victims, but the number of cases that are waiting to be investigated has grown. Even with an added detective, adult assignments are still falling by the wayside, according to the detective inside the sexual assault and child abuse unit.

There are now 48 adult assault cases that aren’t being investigated, according to the detective.

### **Victims wait, cases suffer**

Since 2020, King County prosecutors have seen fewer sexual assault cases referred to their office from Seattle police. Between January and April of 2020, Seattle police referred 123 sexual assault and child abuse cases to prosecutors. In the same time period this year, prosecutors have received just 72 cases from Seattle police.

Ben Santos, chair of the King County Prosecuting Attorney’s Special Assault Unit, said he’s discussed the problem with St. John. He said on more than one occasion she’s described dozens of cases sitting on her desk, unable to be assigned because of a lack of detectives.

“[Seattle police leaders] are having to make really difficult choices right now, given that homicide and violent crime rates are up,” Santos said. “We have done our best to try and let people know what that means on the sexual assault side — it means that these cases are not being investigated the way they should be.”

He said if detectives are getting assigned a case later than they normally would, it makes it challenging to collect evidence that's temporary in nature, including surveillance video, third-party witnesses, and physical evidence.

"I really think that to a degree the investigations themselves suffer," he said.

As do the victims. Santos said he's received reports that victims who go to Harborview Medical Center for treatment after being sexually assaulted can end up waiting hours to file a report with a Seattle officer.

Increasingly, victims of sexual assault who report their cases to Seattle police aren't hearing anything back, said Mary Ellen Stone, CEO of the King County Sexual Assault Resource Center.

Seattle's slowdown in investigating adult rape cases doesn't match what Stone has seen from other local law enforcement agencies.

"We work with 38 jurisdictions, and while everybody's dealing with backlogs and everybody's dealing with staffing shortages, we're not seeing something similar from other jurisdictions," Stone said.

Seattle City Council public safety committee chair Lisa Herbold said in an email she had been communicating with advocates who have raised the alarm about victims whose cases are not being investigated, though she was unaware of any policy within Seattle police to stop assigning adult rape cases to detectives.

The police department has planned to add yet another detective to the sexual assault unit this month to deal with caseload and staffing concerns, according to Nollette. But the long-term solution to understaffing in the sexual assault unit was to increase hiring across the department, Nollette said.

To that end, Harrell announced an initiative to increase police hires last month, while last week the council approved a proposal from Herbold to free up more than \$1 million in unspent salary savings to fund new police hiring incentives and recruitment.

Advocates have stressed, however, that they'd like to see more transparency in how SPD allocates the resources it already has.

On Tuesday, a man reported to police that he had been raped at knifepoint.

His report was added to the list of stalled cases.

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HEADLINE	<b>06/02 Wisconsin cemetery shooting: 2 shot</b>
SOURCE	<a href="https://abcnews.go.com/US/wireStory/police-multiple-victims-wisconsin-cemetery-shooting-85147075">https://abcnews.go.com/US/wireStory/police-multiple-victims-wisconsin-cemetery-shooting-85147075</a>
GIST	<p>RACINE, Wis. -- Two people were shot at a cemetery south of Milwaukee on Thursday, police said.</p> <p>Racine police described the shooting as a "critical" incident and urged people to stay away. Police said multiple shots were fired in the direction of a funeral service Thursday afternoon.</p> <p>Sgt. Kristi Wilcox said a juvenile was treated and released and a second person was flown to a hospital in Milwaukee. It was not immediately known if any suspects were in custody.</p> <p>Racine police said on social media that numerous shots were fired about 2:30 p.m. at Graceland Cemetery in Racine, about 30 miles (48 kilometers) south of Milwaukee. Ascension All Saints Hospital, which is next to the cemetery, said it is treating an undisclosed number of victims from the shooting.</p>

The shooting comes the day after a gunman killed his surgeon and three other people at a Tulsa medical office. It's the latest in a series of mass shootings in United States including the deadly school shooting in Uvalde, Texas, and an attack on a supermarket in Buffalo, New York.

Ascension All Saints Hospital in Racine was on lockdown "out of an abundance of caution" following the shooting, the hospital said in a statement. It later lifted the lockdown.

Racine Mayor Cory Mason released a statement saying the "heinous shooting at a cemetery while a family was already mourning the loss of a loved one is a new low for these perpetrators of violence in our community. The violence has got to stop!"

Mason said he was instructing the police department to actively enforce the city's juvenile curfew ordinance through the weekend, meaning anyone under 18 must be home by 11 p.m.

Area residents said they heard 20 to 30 shots, the Racine Journal Times reported.

Three young men who were playing basketball at Lockwood Park, immediately west of the cemetery, said they heard shots and the fence behind them was repeatedly hit.

Tre Brantley, one of the men, started running to his car the moment he heard shots. He and his brother, Kellyn Foster, both got into their car and ducked down, praying they wouldn't get hurt.

"This has got to stop," Brantley said of the gun violence.

The shooting occurred at the interment for Da'Shontay L. King Sr., who was fatally shot by Racine police May 20, King's sister, Natasha Mullen said.

"We were at the gravesite trying to get prepared to bury him, and bullets started flying everywhere," she told the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel.

A Racine police officer fatally shot King, 37, during a traffic stop about two weeks ago. Police said they were carrying out a search warrant on a vehicle when King, who they said had a handgun, ran from the car. According to police, King ignored commands to drop the weapon and Officer Zachary B. Brenner shot him.

The Department of Justice is investigating the shooting.

Police are asking people to avoid the area in west Racine around the cemetery.

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